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REVELATION
AND THE
LIFE TO COME

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EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION IN TWO PARTS BY
THE AUTHOR OF "THE WAY: THE NATURE
AND MEANS OF REVELATION"

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PREFACE

Parts I and II in what follows—treating of the resurrection, and of certain related spiritual phenomena of the New Testament—are in the nature of an introduction to Part III, which is comprised of extracts from the record of an experience that is best explained in this connection. The writings in Part III are a direct verbal product of this experience. They were printed for private distribution in 1894, under the title “The Kingdom of Heaven”; and are herein reprinted for publication, with the addition of the two introductory parts and an appendix to emphasize their source and character as a revelation of truth.

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PART I

RESURRECTION IN THE LIGHT
OF AN EXPERIENCE

THE RESURRECTION

“In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. . . . And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold! two men stood by them in shining raiment: and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, he is risen. . . . And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. . . .

“The same day, at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you. . . . But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do questionings arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish and an honeycomb, and he took it, and did eat before them.”—STS. MATTHEW, LUKE, and JOHN.

RESURRECTION IN THE LIGHT OF AN EXPERIENCE

THE PHENOMENA OF THE RESURRECTION

I

APART from their association with the sacred character and mission of Christ, the phenomena of the resurrection, studied in the light of later but related experiences, are discerned to be a distinct revelation, disclosing incidentally the nature of that intermediate stage of life between the earthly and the heavenly: the phenomena referred to were comprised in the manifestations of the risen Jesus intervening between his death and his ascension into heaven, specified as an interval of forty days.

That the phenomena of the resurrection, as recorded in the Gospel, have commonly

been regarded as miraculous, may account for the fact that for many Christian believers at the present time, under the influence of recent modes of thought, they have lost in some degree their significance as a revelation of truth. That which the apostle Paul regarded as the central truth of the Christian revelation, as implied in the words "If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain,"¹ is now often treated with silence, as if beyond the bounds of rational conviction; while the manifestations of the risen Jesus, if not deemed miraculous, or regarded as mythical tradition, or as hallucination, are interpreted by others as mystical symbols: and this latter conception is not without its significance, notwithstanding its entire variance with that order of attestation, as to the objective fact, implied in the words "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."²

¹ 1 Cor. xv: 3-8 and 12-15.

² Luke xxiv: 39.

II

Manifestations from the unseen projected on the plane of the known world, though not uncommonly reported in all ages and frequently in the scriptures, are unverifiable on ordinary grounds of evidence for the reason that the phenomena cannot be called forth or repeated at will, as facts are verifiable in the physical world. An apparitional psychic form, "a spirit," subjectively manifested, would be in accord with ideas, however derived, that are common to the race; but a physical manifestation from the unseen, as specified concerning the phenomena of the resurrection, seemed to contradict the reason as well as common beliefs; and notwithstanding the visible, audible, and tactual forms of evidence accorded the disciples, when the manifestation had vanished from their sight more than one of them questioned its reality, for it is said that "some doubted":¹

¹ Matt. xxviii: 17.

and this frankly expressed doubt tends to confirm the integrity of the Gospel record.

Though physical in form the manifestation of the risen Jesus appeared and vanished away before the eyes of the disciples, "the doors being shut."¹ Though attested by the senses the experience was abnormal to common beliefs; as such it was startling and distracting to the mind—the disciples "were terrified and affrighted."²

III

While they "believed not for joy,³ and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here anything to eat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish. And he took it, and did eat before them."⁴ Why this further insistence, by this special act, after Jesus had demonstrated to the senses the objective reality of his manifested

¹ John xx: 19 and 26.

² Luke xxiv: 37.

³ As "too good to be true," in the language of today.

⁴ Luke xxiv: 43. (R. V.)

form? This significant act bears witness to the fact that the manifestation was in itself a revelation of truth; not, as often interpreted, in the form of a miraculous symbol, but an orderly disclosure of that which is of universal application in connection with immortality, namely, the immediate resurrection of the human personality at dissolution and its ultimate ascension into heaven.

By assuming physical materiality in the presence of witnesses, partaking of food, and then vanishing into invisible conditions, the manifestations of the resurrection, so far as their phenomenal side is concerned, were a demonstration of the fact that the physical organism is fundamentally psychic; and this psychical personality is "clothed upon"¹ physically in a physical world, but is freed from that order of substance in passing into a spiritual world. In other words the soul itself is an organic form, and the opening of psychic senses,

¹ 2 Cor. v: 1-2.

as to hearing and seeing¹—frequently referred to in the scriptures as an experience common to “prophets” and “seers”—is the unveiling of the senses of this psychic organism, or “spiritual body.”²

IV

Viewed as a revelation of truth the manifestations of the risen Jesus—now visible, audible, and tactual, and then vanishing into the unseen—attest this organic constitution of the soul; the manifestation of which, under favoring conditions, is not miraculous, but orderly and natural within certain limitations. The manifestations subsequently witnessed by Paul,³ though no longer physical, enabled that apostle to determine, specifically, through the knowledge thus gained, the truths stated in his Epistle to the Corinthians concerning

¹ 2 Kings vi: 17; and Luke xxiv: 31.

² 1 Cor. xv: 44.

³ Acts ix: 3-6; xxii: 17, 22; xxiii: 11; and xxvii: 23-24.

the return of the dead; wherein he says, "There is a natural body, and there is [not, there will be] a spiritual body":¹ implying that these coëxist in man; that is, strictly speaking in the light of subsequent testimony, there is but one organism, but differently conditioned—manifested physically in a physical world, and psychically in a spiritual world.

This conception once clearly grasped, concerning the organic constitution of the soul itself, will be found to explain, in part, the nature of manifestations from the unseen; the soul, at times, even while in the flesh, being capable of acting independently of physical conditions that relate it temporarily to a physical world.

V

As thus discerned the manifestations of the resurrection were not miraculous creations of the hour, but a temporary precipita-

¹ I Cor. xv: 44.

tion, as it were (speaking tropically), of physical conditions upon a psychical, or "spiritual body," that already existed before dissolution, and which death simply sets free. As attested by Paul the knowledge of this fact stands in marked contrast with conceptions which have, at times, identified organic existence solely and exclusively with that physical body which, in the common experience, decays in the grave, as expressed in the following:—"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many"¹—momentary manifestations from the unseen being thus identified in the mind of the writer with former imaginings regarding the state of the dead.

In marked contrast with such conceptions is the revelation of the truth in him who, having died upon the cross, after a brief

¹ Matt. xxvii: 52, 53.

interval manifested himself to his followers, revealing the common experience that follows dissolution; when, after regaining consciousness, man finds himself alive and in a familiar organism, the exact counterpart in outward appearance to that body which was laid in the grave, but differently conditioned. Referring to this change, Paul affirms, "But some will say, How are the dead raised up? and in what body do they come? . . . It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body,"¹ &c., and the manifestations of the risen Jesus will be found to mark the distinction when the phenomena of the resurrection are studied as a revelation of truth.

VI

Transmutations, whether of the psychical into the physical, or of the physical into the psychic, are frequently instanced in the scriptures, and are not unknown through subsequent experiences credibly

¹ I Cor. xv: 35-44.

attested. That there are forces and forms of matter, so called, that extend into the unseen world, or are projected thence into this world, through which means psychic phenomena may be outwardly conditioned and sometimes made physically visible under laws as immutable as those governing the natural phenomena of the physical world, is now gradually being reduced to knowledge. The experience of the seer and prophet implies an organic connection between the seen and unseen worlds, a correlation of forces operating in a psychic substance common to both worlds and forming a material connection of some kind, however rarefied, or sublimated, when contrasted with the physical, yet known through its forces and effects.

That the transmutation of the psychic into the physical (and contrariwise), is possible, is attested by the manifestations of the risen Jesus, for he appeared and disappeared in the presence of his disciples; and this is not exceptional in the human

experience. But a distinction is to be noted in the transmutation of that physical body which was laid in the tomb.

That the physical, when wholly purified, or "redeemed from corruption,"¹ may be transmuted into the psychical without undergoing the common experience, is affirmed in the case of Elijah and of Enoch—who "walked with God and was translated."² When the sepulchre where the body of Jesus was laid was visited by the disciples it was found empty, and his manifestations from the unseen began at once. That these manifestations, (of which ten are mentioned in the scriptures), were usually brief, may be inferred from the record; but on several specified occasions they appear to have been prolonged; as when Jesus aimed to establish in the minds of his followers his personal identification and the substantial reality of his manifested form;³ likewise when mani-

¹ Acts ii: 31.

² 2 Kings ii: 11; Heb. xi: 5.

³ John xx: 19-20.

fested on the way to Emmaus,¹ and on the shore of the lake;² and finally when "he led them out as far as Bethany."³ Nothing comparable, in degree, with the fullness or completeness of these manifestations from the unseen is met with elsewhere in the human experience.

VII

The appearance to Abraham of the three angels, who partook of food and conversed with the patriarch⁴—Sarah also being a witness—resembles the manifestation of the Christ in some features, but not as to one who had recently passed through death; while the record of that remoter experience has not the particularity of the New Testament scriptures concerning the phenomena of the resurrection. It may, however, be remarked in passing, that no "power," "miracle" (so called), or "work," manifested by Christ, was wholly unpre-

¹ Luke xxiv: 13-36.

² John xxi: 1-14.

³ Luke xxiv: 50.

⁴ Gen. xviii.

cedented; for the powers manifested by the prophets, though exhibited in subordinate degree, are strictly related in kind to those manifested by Jesus; and it may yet be more widely known that these phenomena are all orderly and in strict conformity with higher laws of organic being that are without variableness or shadow of turning; as are the laws of that more familiar order of nature with which the human mind is commonly occupied on the physical plane.

VIII

Divested of the miraculous the manifestations of the risen Jesus, studied in the light of related phenomena, reveal in a degree the natural constitution of that unseen world which is entered through death. A miracle could explain nothing, for it would stand unrelated to universal truth as applicable to all men; but a manifestation from the unseen projected, as it were, on the plane of the visible world

in orderly form, through preternatural laws governing the requisite conditions, makes knowable by this means that which otherwise could not be known except it were thus shown.

The evidence of truths of this kind rests in the scriptures on the testimony of "faithful witnesses," who report the facts simply and without argument as an actual experience attested by forms of proof with which the human mind is familiar in the order of its natural constitution. That it requires "faith" to accept this testimony on the part of others, is another matter pertaining to the religious mind: Jesus reproached his disciples for "their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen."¹

IX

Freeing the record of subsequent speculative conjecture—which may either deny

¹ Mark xvi: 14.

the reality of the experience, or interpret it in terms of its own mental habit—the phenomena of the resurrection, as reported by witnesses and studied in the light of subordinate but related experiences, is discerned as a distinct revelation of an intermediate world, or state of being, intervening between the earthly and the heavenly; a substantial though unseen world into which the soul is immediately transmitted through dissolution; not by traversing space, or undergoing any change affecting the mind, but simply by freeing the psychic organism from its earthly shell or tenement—which in the common experience falls back into the earth by which it was nourished.

Viewed as a revelation of what is common to man at dissolution, and associated with a personality with whom the disciples had recently been in familiar intercourse as a friend with friend, the manifestation of the risen Jesus occasioned extreme joy by its demonstrating as the truth that

which, if thought of at all, was regarded as merely conjectural—namely, personal immortality. More than this, they saw in the manifestation the persistence of human life beyond the grave in the form of an organic personality fully conscious of all that is deemed precious in the earthly life.

X

Divesting the experience of that element of the miraculous which would separate it from the life of man by isolating it as an unrelated fact pertaining to the life of Christ alone, every incidental act and circumstance of the resurrection may be studied as a revelation of truth. Viewed in this light it is no longer possible to regard that unseen world which is entered at dissolution as a bourne from which no traveler returns; for he who returned in fulfillment of the promise made to his disciples¹ while he was with them in the

¹ John xvi: 22.

flesh, has revealed not a little of the conditions of that unseen world by disclosing the nature of the organism that inhabits it. Much is also revealed in the acts and words of the risen Jesus while thus manifesting himself; for the revelation discloses the order of mind in which the soul rises at dissolution, as still occupied with its former interests and affections, these remaining unchanged in the earlier stages of that life.

Paul, discerning in the revelations accorded him after Christ's ascension into heaven, that although "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," nevertheless adds:—"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things." In other words, what cannot be seen by the physical sense, or discerned by the natural perceptions, is disclosed freely and fully to a spiritual consciousness, when that form of

apprehension is developed in man. And the apostle refers to this higher, or spiritual revelation, as unstinted:—"For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God . . . which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."¹ Nothing could be plainer than his declaration that this spiritual enlightenment is through a direct form of teaching by a conscious means, which the apostle was able to distinguish from the wisdom and operation of his own mind.

XI

From the nature of the testimony it may be discerned that he who "brought life and immortality to light" included in the revelation both a natural and a spiritual experience: the phenomena of the resurrection attested the former, and the "manifestations of the Holy Ghost" attest the

¹ 1 Cor. ii: 9-14.

latter as reported in *The Acts* and *Epistles*, and in the *Apocalypse* of John—not to mention subsequent experiences not uncommon. The truths concerning the immediate resurrection of the organic personality, at dissolution, were thus manifested to the world as of universal application; for in all stages of existence Christ reveals the life and destiny of “perfect man,”¹ of a perfected humanity.

The manifestations made to the women, and to others not of the eleven, attest the freedom of these revelations, without regard to special channels. That Christ gave expression in two of his most momentous teachings, to individuals not of his chosen body of followers—to Nicodemus and to the woman of Samaria—is likewise in evidence of this “freedom of the Spirit”; which regards only the human heart wherever and by whomsoever the gift of light is received in its original form of

¹ Eph. iv: 13.

communion; for the message of "good tidings of great joy" is primarily to the human consciousness. In all ages the first and most important function of revelation is to bring life and light to man; and there is no distinction of persons, or of instrumentalities—nowhere is this more clearly shown than in the scriptures.

XII

Nevertheless, associated as the manifestations of the resurrection were with times and seasons, with "the hour," with "place" sometimes; and as dependent on conditions the lack of which made it impossible for Jesus, on a former occasion, in Nazareth, to do there "any mighty work because of their unbelief,"¹ suggests their distinct relation to favoring circumstances. That the risen Jesus directed his disciples to "go into Galilee," unto a place that he "had appointed them,"² that

¹ Mark vi: 4-5.

² Matt. xxviii: 7, 10, 16.

he might there manifest himself to them, suggests that there may have been favoring conditions in a place which was familiar and associated with memories and affections—what significance has it otherwise? Much importance is attached to “holy places” in the scriptures, and it is a characteristic of the human mind to identify a place with an experience through emotional associations. When it is said of the disciples, after the ascension of Christ, that “they were all with one accord in one place”;¹ and again, that they “continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren”;² the true Christian mystic, or believer in this conscious intercourse—who is not wholly unfamiliar with the nature of the means—would say that there was significance in this, as affording conditions that were favorable. Prayer has a direct relation to this, as an interest which unites as one

¹ Acts ii: 1.

² Acts i: 14.

several minds with sincere aspiration and expectancy:—"Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst."¹ Christ distinguished between his followers and "the multitude"² when referring to these things as heavenly mysteries:³ while on especially sacred occasions he chose even from the twelve, three, as more nearly related to the essentials for such manifestation, or conscious communion.⁴

XIII

As an experience revealing what is common to man at dissolution the resurrection of Jesus is the central truth of his "good tidings"; and when its universal application is once clearly apprehended it will again become what it was to Paul and the immediate followers of Christ—the very heart of the Christian revelation. For this is the characteristic of the messi-

¹ Matt. xviii: 20; John xiv: 22. ² Matt. xiii: 34.

³ Matt. xiii: 10-11.

⁴ Matt. xvii: 1-9.

anic revelation in Christ: that "the way, the truth, and the life"¹ were manifested to the world in the form of a personality that identifies the revelation throughout with the human experience. It is not a philosophy, but an experience, and as such it addresses all orders of mind with equal power.

The resurrection of Jesus was a revelation of truths by things shown; disclosing by actual manifestation the continuance of organic life beyond the grave, the persistence of individual personality and all that this implies, and its final ascension into heaven. These fundamental truths were expressed in the form of personal acts and habitual modes of thought: at Emmaus they recognized Jesus "in the breaking of bread";² and when manifesting himself "on the shore of the lake" it is said that "no one durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord";³ for on these occasions he was

¹ John xiv: 6.

² Luke xxiv: 35.

³ John xxi: 12.

differently manifested, being recognized through his acts and spoken words.

XIV

A manifestation of the psychic organism projected outwardly, as it were, from an unseen world, as a true organism, and no mere spectral form, or "shade," carries with it an implied environment in correspondence with that organism, which to some extent may be apprehended by the natural reason; for the manifestation implies an order of preternatural law, or psychic agency, that determines this organism objectively, and admits of its being visibly projected on the plane of the known world. Thus the phenomena of the resurrection, when studied in the light of related experiences, will be found to enlarge the horizon of the mind so as to include somewhat of that unseen world in the form of definite knowledge.

To draw an analogy: it is quite possible

in the light of science to form, in a degree, a true conception of a prehistoric past by the study of extinct organisms once related to that past; and in like manner when shown the living organism of a future or invisible world, it is possible for the mind to apprehend—from the nature of this organism and the order of mind associated with it—somewhat of its invisible environment and life. This is a rational explanation of the act of the risen Jesus in partaking of food while thus manifested in the presence of his disciples; and the transmutation of the food partaken of, when he vanished from their sight, forms part of the revelation; for it suggests a similar transmutation of the physical body that was laid in the tomb. The specified location of “the linen clothes lying, and the napkin that was wrapped about his head, not lying with the linen clothes,”¹ indicates that these fell in their places when the body was transmuted without

¹ John xx: 6-7.

being unswathed¹—these details are significant.

XV

Phenomena that apparently contradict the common experience are usually deemed abnormal, supernatural, or miraculous; but to those who have witnessed these things, like the prophet for instance, they stand normal to an enlarged consciousness which apprehends them as a definite form of knowledge. By this means, from his own experience of manifestations from the unseen, the apostle Paul was enabled to affirm the return of the dead, and to discriminate the nature of their organism from that which is physical. For revelation is distinctly a form of knowledge acquired through preternatural experiences making known, by manifestation, that which the mind cannot acquire of itself; but once known, then this form of knowl-

¹ John xix: 40.

edge is no longer abnormal to that mind; manifestations from the unseen are then discerned as both orderly and natural—though for the majority of persons they appear to stand wholly unrelated to what is commonly designated the known order of nature. Phenomena apparently as fixed as the stars in their orbits may, with the progress of mind, be found to be subject to change, or transfiguration, through the operation of newly discovered laws of being which extend the order of nature far into the unseen; enlarging the apprehension of conscious life so as to embrace somewhat of the future state, as a means of drawing the human soul onward and upward “out of the earth”: this is what prophecy affirms and the new revelations are verifying.

XVI

While there is a spiritual, or supernatural, element in heavenly revelations forming

the basis of religious belief, the channels by which this is communicated to man are not supernatural, but preternatural; and as still of the order of nature, whether of seen or unseen worlds, they may be studied without prejudice, or superstitious fear. Jesus plainly indicated this when he permitted the apostle Thomas to apply his prescribed tests to establish his belief in the reality of the manifestation; and this experience of Thomas may be considered as representative of that order of mind which cannot arrive at a belief in immortality except through some form of sensible attestation; some empirical "sign," or "token," that may constitute a basis for this belief. Thomas declared that he would not believe unless he could apply such tests as he himself deemed reliable and satisfactory.¹ In all honesty of mind persons of this temperamental constitution require proofs acceptable to their own mental habit. If one standing so close to the

¹ John xx: 24-29.

person of Jesus, and knowing so well the character of the other witnesses, declared he could not accept their testimony as to the fact, it is not surprising that there are others, the vast majority in fact, remote as to time and in their mental attitude, who are in the same dilemma, requiring evidence adapted to their own limitations. The demands of Thomas were not denied, and his physical tests lifted the manifestation out of the region of mental, or emotional hallucination, by demonstrating its objective reality: the experience is representative of that form of knowledge which rests on observation and experiment.

XVII

When Jesus "arose from the dead" he was manifested as in familiar surroundings, with his human affections still active, uniting him to his "brethren" and to his former interests. Let us look at this, not

as seen across the ages, or through the speculative mind that intervenes, but studied, as it were, at first hand by the light of witnesses invited to "handle and see"¹ that it was indeed the same Jesus whom they had known and loved; who expressed his mind familiarly in the words "Children, have ye any meat?"² and again, "Come and break your fast."³ Sacred is that bond of friendship manifested in such acts, and the tie that binds heart to heart—it is divine. How natural and free from all that is morbid, or abnormal to the present life, were these manifestations and spoken words of the resurrected Jesus! The conjectures of the speculative mind, as to the condition of the dead, are in marked contrast with the naturalness of the manifestation of the risen Christ standing in the midst of his followers, disclosing to their minds and hearts his undying love and fellowship, as suggested

¹ Acts x: 41.

² John xxi: 5.

³ John xxi: 12. (R. V.)

by the words "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."¹

XVIII

During the interval of the forty days Jesus was manifested as a man; not as an angel, or spirit; that is, the manifestations were of a natural state of being, on a natural plane of life: the earth was with him still, his thoughts were occupied with the things of this life—every act and utterance implies this. He makes but brief reference to the Father, to whom, he said, he had "not yet ascended."² The teaching of the resurrection is with reference to human interests; the experience appears to have been wholly natural, rather than spiritual; and when he "opened their minds to an understanding of the scriptures"³ it was with reference to the fact that the "Christ should suffer, and

¹ John xx: 20.

² John xx: 17.

³ Luke xxiv: 45-47

rise from the dead on the third day; and that repentance for the remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"; teaching them to observe "all things whatsoever I have commanded you."¹ And again: "These are my words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me."² For further spiritual teaching than that already given while he was with them in the earthly life "he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father; which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water, unto repentance; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence."³ As to

¹ Matt. xxviii: 19-20.

² Luke xxiv: 44.

³ Acts i: 4.

their discernment of spiritual things, "which the Father hath put in his own power," they must wait until "after that the Holy Spirit is come upon"¹ them: for, as Paul affirmed, "spiritual things are spiritually discerned."²

XIX

That the revelation in Jesus is of universal application may be inferred from his words to Mary, when manifesting himself at the sepulchre:—"Go to my brethren, and say unto them; I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God."³ He is their elder brother; they are of one family of "man"; his spiritual or divine sonship to God is to be theirs likewise when they are "born of the Spirit."⁴ He joyfully reveals to them what is their common inheritance; what is common to the life and destiny of a perfected human-

¹ Acts i: 7-8.

³ John xx: 17.

² 1 Cor. ii: 14.

⁴ John iii: 5-7.

ity. In every incidental act and circumstance of his manifestations after his dissolution there is a revelation of truths equally applicable to his followers when they stand where he stands, even to the transmutation of the purified physical. In this light nothing in the revelation is miraculous, or contrary to established order, which under like circumstances is universal.

When the course of human life is thus revealed as projected into an invisible, but not less substantial world, without change of personality, or the cessation of human interests, all this may be discerned as familiar, natural, and reasonable, however startling was its abrupt disclosure to the disciples. The revelation was for them and for all "good tidings of great joy"; for death was seen to be swallowed up in conscious and continuous life. Like birth, death was shown to be a parturition, a "dissolution" of the physical simply, all else remaining as before. For the world that is entered at death is revealed as

related to the powers of the psychic senses quite as substantially as the physical world is related to the physical senses; the organic manifestations of the resurrection plainly imply this: the character, including the will and affections, remaining the same; for changes in these respects are neither abrupt nor miraculous.

XX

It was the orderliness and familiarity of the manifestations of the resurrection, as regards all the constituents of individual personality, that occasioned joy in connection with the revelation of a future state. Were the manifestations strange, unfamiliar, or of the pattern of imaginary conceptions standing unrelated to the present life, as commonly fancied, they might have inspired peculiar emotions, but not those of joy. The revelation that the life once begun is unending; that individual identity persists throughout all outward changes; that the present life is harmoni-

ously, and sometimes consciously, related to the next world; and that the discarnate soul is still human and natural in its affections and life; make it desirable to study this order of revelation as reasonable and profitable, and as capable of being brought to some extent within the bounds of certain knowledge.

XXI

Ideas of the miraculous in Christ's life may so separate his life from the life of man that Jesus is parted from his brethren. The eye should not be blinded by appearances: Jesus revealed the divine order as in itself it really is for everyone who follows in his footsteps with a like "faith in God."¹ If the path trod by Jesus were supernatural, in the sense of miraculous—raised above human possibility by special miracle—then Jesus could not serve as a pattern for man, for he would be separated

¹ Mark xi: 22.

from the human experience. It is this idea of the miraculous that has tended to hide from view the real scope and meaning of the manifestations of the risen Christ, as a revelation of truth disclosing the nature of the life to come.

The manifestations, in addition to what has been shown, imply that man, in the immediate next stage of life, is still concerned with the completion of his earthly tasks, as witnessed by the return of Moses and Elias in communion with Jesus; and by the risen Christ himself in his intercourse with those whom he had known on earth—with the women as well as with the eleven disciples. The passage of the soul to a heavenly realm appears to be conditionally connected with the completion of its earthly responsibilities, as said of those who had gone before:—"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."¹

¹ Heb. xi: 39-40.

XXII

That no essential tie is severed by death is made evident by the revelation of the resurrected Jesus. He manifested himself first to the women; whose intuitional perceptions and active sympathy, which drew them to the sepulchre, may have rendered them more susceptible to the influence. He remembered the individual characteristics of his disciples, their weaknesses and infirmities of faith. He accorded to Thomas his prescribed tests to induce belief; he strove to establish the faith of Peter on the sure foundation of love, as the root of the divine life. His approaches were individual and sympathetic, as to Mary Magdalene, to Thomas, and to Peter; the earthly tie remained unbroken. He supped with his followers; he walked with them by the way; he conversed with them as between man and man; he came to them while engaged in their daily toil, in familiar ways recognizing their individ-

ual needs. Though this conscious intercourse was at times but momentary, or of the passing hour, it nevertheless revealed, by these hints and suggestions, the persistence, in a future state, of all that is deemed most precious in the earthly life, as to the natural affections not less than in spiritual aspiration.

XXIII

While the physical is ceaselessly undergoing change, and the human organism is perpetually renewing itself throughout all its stages of growth and development, nevertheless there is a certain apparent permanency of form and feature by which outward personality is identified in the earthly life. But the appearance of the psychic personality, as revealed in the manifestations of the resurrection, is not confined within these limitations. Conditioned in a more sublimated form of substance the "spiritual body"¹ responds

¹ I Cor. xv: 44.

more freely to the will and the mental moods. The variableness of the form of the risen Jesus is variously attested in the scriptures, and previous to that occasion when he manifested himself for the special benefit of Thomas. That Mary did not at first recognize the risen Christ at the sepulchre, mistaking him for "the gardener,"¹ may have been due to the obscurity of the early dawn; the single expression, "Mary!" awakening within her heart a recognition of the Master. But to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, in the afternoon of the same day, Jesus manifested himself in a form that was plainly not recognizable, for it is said that he appeared to them as "a stranger." It was not till he sat at meat with them, when "the day was far spent," that "their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight."² Referring to this occasion the scripture says, "He was manifested in another form unto two

¹ John xx: 15.

² Luke xxiv: 18.

of them, as they walked, on their way into the country.”¹ Thus these two disciples, one of whom was an intimate follower of Jesus, saw in the resurrected form of the Master nothing to identify him as one whom they had known and loved, so far as the external features of his person were concerned. It was when their spiritual perceptions were “opened” that they recognized him, then they recalled how his conversation had caused their hearts to “burn within them as he spake with them by the way.”²

XXIV

When, therefore, he manifested himself to his followers with the intent of identifying himself as the same Jesus who had died on the cross, disclosing to them the wounds inflicted upon his person, it is not to be inferred that these marks were permanent in the resurrection body; they were dependent on his will and purpose; if he

¹ Mark xvi: 12.

² Luke xxiv: 32.

willed his body to bear these marks they were sensibly present; and if he willed the manifestation of himself to be outwardly "in another form" the appearance was directly responsive to his mood of mind. With the comparative rigidity of a physically conditioned organism, as known to this world, this seems magical and perhaps confusing—as to the identification of outward personality. But it is not so to the psychic perceptions; for in purely psychical conditions the response of outward feature to the inward mental mood is far more mobile in reflecting thought. And this is one of the truths disclosed by the varied character of the manifestations of the forty days, revealing a larger freedom of the mind over its environment by virtue of the superior conditions in which the soul rises at dissolution.

XXV

Had there been an abrupt termination of the earthly life of Jesus, and an im-

mediate "ascension into heaven" without these manifestations from the intermediate state, there would have been no revelation of human destiny in the sense of bringing to light the path of the soul's progress in passing from the earthly to the heavenly states of being—a knowledge of which is profitable for inducing belief in personal immortality. And instead of a religion based on the revelation of "life and immortality," the teaching of the Christ, had Jesus not thus manifested himself from the unseen, would have been simply a contribution to the teaching of the prophets, and doubtless would have been classed as such. How otherwise could there have been any knowledge formed of that heavenly personality designated "the Holy Ghost"—which the scripture says "was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified"¹—except for the revelation of that living personality which, at the close of this intervening

¹ John vii: 39.

period, was symbolically manifested as “ascending into heaven when a cloud received him out of their sight”?¹ For, until spiritually discerned, spiritual truths are conveyed to the natural mind through symbols; and by ascending through space Jesus figuratively implied his spiritual “ascension” through the heavens “to the Father.”

XXVI

That this spiritual or heavenly personality of the Christ should receive recognition and be serviceable to man, it was necessary that Jesus should first manifest himself naturally from the intermediate state; in order to demonstrate to the natural mind that it was to be “this same Jesus” who should “so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven”² when returning in the power and personality of the *Paraclete*, or Comforter.³

¹ Acts i: 9.

² Acts i: 11. (R. V.)

³ 2 Cor. iii: 17.

Manifesting himself, therefore, first in a form and order of thought with which his followers were already familiar, the risen Jesus gradually led them on to form a more inward and spiritual apprehension of his true personality and unseen presence. How otherwise could it have been known that he still lived and had them in his care? having "passed into the heavens"¹ with a full consciousness of his earthly life, carrying these memories and affections with him into the Father's unveiled presence—as figuratively implied?

To repeat: it was essential for a knowledge of the heavenly Christ, and of his mode of operation—sometimes by personal manifestation and verbal communion, as made to Paul and John—that his later spiritual ministrations as "the Comforter" should have been preceded by the experience and phenomena of the resurrection as reported in the Gospels; revealing the persistence, in a future state, of the human

¹ Heb. iv: 14.

personality of the Christ, and his final ascension into heaven. For it is through that heavenly human personality of the glorified Christ, filled with the Spirit of God, that the Divine Presence is brought to the consciousness of men, enabling them to distinguish that spiritual or divine influence from the operation of their own minds.

XXVII

Let us pause to consider what was the original attitude of mind on the part of the disciples toward these revelations and manifestations from the unseen. In the ordinary sense it was not religious; the disciples were all Israelites and followed that order of worship and belief. The association of this new and momentous experience with doctrinal beliefs was an afterthought, a subsequent development. The disciples, including Jesus, were all laymen; the whole experience was in a

sense laic—that is, standing wholly apart from temple, priest, or doctrinal beliefs. There was no religious authority whatever associated with the experience beyond that derived from the sanction of a spiritual consciousness in the hearts of the followers of Jesus. Institutional religion was set against it: it was simply a question of life and light addressing the mind in a fuller sense than had ever been experienced or conceived before. Its subsequent religious association, as commonly understood, has had a tendency to veil it in part with doctrinal conceptions born of systematic forms of thought and of institutional ideas; by this means the experience gradually acquired an authoritative status that originally was denied it by the institutional mind.

XXVIII

The prophet necessarily must have no other sanction, or authority, in the form of

credential, than the "power" of his deliverance:¹ any association of human or ecclesiastical authority with this would subvert its dependence on a divine inspiration; this explains the fact that the prophets were almost invariably laymen. The institutional mind, as such, is concerned with maintaining and developing an institutional past; with reference to public worship, the ministering of sacraments, and the preservation and interpretation of what Paul terms "the oracles of God."² Its attitude is naturally hostile toward any new form of revelation:³ and this doubtless is a reasonable and consistent attitude; not as applicable to the individual, but adapted to the maintenance of institutional functions and forms, and for guarding against error, or imposture. Before a new truth of revelation can be taken up and incorporated with institutional religion it must have experienced the test of time in its appeal

¹ Jeremiah xxiii: 28, 29.

² Rom. iii: 1-2.

³ John ix: 29.

to the spiritual consciousness. There is a reason therefore why, in the initial experiences, revelation and conscious communion with the unseen should not be identified with human sanctions, or ecclesiastical authority. The apostle Paul specifies weak and despised instrumentalities as divinely chosen for this purpose; that the power may be known to be of God, and not of men.¹

XXIX

And with regard to the experiences affirming the resurrection of Jesus, this is the characteristic of the original witnesses—they were exclusively religious laymen, and of both sexes; they were not of “the wise and prudent”² in any intellectual or philosophical sense. The initial manifestations of the risen Christ were made to the women, who were the first to herald his

¹ 1 Cor. i: 26–30; 2 Cor. iv: 7.

² Matt. xi: 25; Luke x: 21.

resurrection:¹ this is significant; as is also the fact that the initial manifestation was to Mary of Magdala; and not to the apostles, or to the one who stood nearest to Jesus.

It is necessary to divest the actual experience of subsequent overlying conceptions and associations—to see it, as it were, at first hand, in the light of plain-minded “witnesses” whose report is wholly free from philosophical conjecture—to discern in the phenomena of the resurrection a revelation of truth in the form of an actual experience on the plane of nature. During the interval between his resurrection and ascension the character of the manifestations all indicate that Jesus was still in a natural state of being; there was no suggestion of heavenly things. He aimed to impress his followers, both men and women, with the truth that he was not parted from them by dissolution. By his sudden appearance, and disappearance, when mani-

¹ John xx: 17, 18.

festing himself, he gradually accustomed them to think of him as present, though invisible; and by his words to Thomas, and to Peter, as cognizant of their individual thoughts and needs. Thenceforth his invisible presence was not less real to them than were these phenomenal manifestations. A distinct step had been taken by this means for giving substantial reality to spiritual conceptions; which otherwise must be vague, conjectural, and ineffective.

It was no abstract emotion that the risen Jesus sought to awaken in the heart of Peter by his thrice repeated question "Lovest thou me?"¹ but a concrete love and devotion to that living personality revealed to him as "the Christ of God." And when the approach was no longer from without, through the physical sense, as Paul discerned of the heavenly Christ—when "known no more after the flesh"²—then the conception formed of that heavenly and divine presence, "the Son of man

¹ John xxi: 15-17.

² 2 Cor. v: 16.

in heaven," passes from a natural to a spiritual order of discernment; which is not less real, to say the least, when "spiritual things are spiritually discerned."¹

XXX

The phenomena of the resurrection, and those which followed after the ascension of Jesus, enable the mind to mark a distinction between the psychical and the spiritual in manifestations from the unseen. By confounding psychical with spiritual things erroneous views are formed that engender misconceptions and superstitions. All psychic phenomena are essentially organic; they pertain to an order of nature, whether of seen or unseen worlds. They are therefore not in themselves more sacred than are physical phenomena; to the devout mind all things are sacred when rightly viewed. That which is psychic, as to forces and phenomena, pertains to an

¹ 1 Cor. ii: 14.

invisible realm, or world, or state of being, wherein all things are outwardly conditioned in a form of substance corresponding to psychic organisms, or "spiritual bodies," as Paul terms them;¹ and are governed by laws that are preternatural, but not supernatural. Beyond this order of nature, pertaining to a physically-invisible psychic state, that alone is spiritual which is divine. Truly spiritual phenomena, therefore, are psychic manifestations informed with divinity itself—such are the "manifestations of the Holy Ghost"; and these followed after the ascension of Christ into heaven.

XXXI

The order, or form of revelation, is equally important and essential in all its stages, and the manifestations of the forty days cannot be dispensed with if the mind of the believer would pass intelligently

¹ 1 Cor. xv: 44.

from the dispensation of the historic Christ, to the ministrations of the *Paraclete*, or heavenly Christ.¹ As in the creation and perfecting of man there is a manifest order implied in the words "First the natural; afterward, then that which is spiritual";² so do the manifestations of the resurrection, as reported in the Gospels, stand in relation to those which followed after the ascension of Jesus. In both experiences the phenomenal has its place in supplying the initial impulse, or data, for the development of a spiritual consciousness, as in the experience of Paul in the way. Were there no revelation by manifestation and prophecy there could be no substantial basis for spiritual conceptions: and if this means of enlightenment be ruled out of the religious consciousness through unbelief; or relegated wholly to the past as miraculous; or as merely mythical tradition, or hallucination; then that spiritual development,

¹ John vii: 39; Heb. xii: 25; 2 Cor. iii: 17.

² 1 Cor. xv: 46.

which was so marked in the experience of the immediate followers of Christ, must either come to an end, or forever remain stationary; notwithstanding the promise that the *Paraclete* would "guide into all truth and reveal the things to come."¹

XXXII

To conclude, therefore: while there is a spiritual view of "resurrection," implying the soul's rising "from death unto life"² through the quickening power of the Spirit, there is likewise a natural view, as shown in the Gospel narrative, revealing the resurrection of the organic personality; both experiences have their place in the revelation of Jesus Christ. As regards the former, the spiritual view, Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."³ Life and

¹ John xvi: 13.

² John v: 24.

³ John xi: 25-26.

death are herein referred to as a subjective experience, with reference to the presence or absence of the divine Spirit in the consciousness of man. This distinction is likewise indicated in the teaching of Paul:—"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."¹ The apostle also refers to Christ himself as "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."² But these spiritual conceptions are not intended as a substitute for that resurrection of the organic personality attested in the Gospels; they are super-added to that experience; being based upon it, by analogy, as the rising of the soul into a higher order of life by the quickening power of the indwelling Spirit, when the heart has been opened to that divine influence.

There is therefore both a natural and a spiritual view of resurrection, and both views are equally true, and equally adapted

¹ Col. iii: 3.

² Rom. i: 4.

to human need. Spiritually "the kingdom of heaven," as taught by Christ, is a state of life wherein the human is united to the divine through oneness of will and spirit—whether in the earthly life or in a future state. Nevertheless there is a heaven of the angels, a celestial paradise,¹ which is not less real and substantial, to say the least, than is the present world to the natural consciousness. And while, on the natural plane, the words of Jesus, as to his being "lifted up above the earth," are interpreted as "signifying by what death he should die";² on the spiritual plane they have another and even deeper significance, as referring to the ascension of the living Christ into heaven:—Jesus said: "And I, if I be lifted up from [R. V. marg. 'out of'] the earth, will draw all men unto me."³

He who died on the cross and was laid in the tomb, rose again after a brief interval,

¹ Luke xxiii: 43.

² John xii: 33.

³ John xii: 32.

manifesting himself to his followers. And at the end of forty days "He led them out as far as Bethany,"¹ to Mount Olivet, which is near to Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey. . . . "And while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in shining raiment; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."²

The disciples, both men and women, were thus made "witnesses" by manifestations of the risen and ascended Christ; attesting the fulfillment of the promise of a *Paraclete*, or Comforter, as a heavenly personality with whom henceforth they, and all succeeding disciples to the end of the world, were to be brought, at times, in

¹ Luke xxiv: 50-51.

² Acts i: 9-12.

conscious communion; and in no other way could this momentous truth have been conveyed to the human mind as a reality, than through this experience of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus as narrated in the Gospels. In the absence of that objective experience the immortality of man must have remained a matter of speculative conjecture; as it still is when viewed in the light of philosophy, apart from a revelation of the truth.

PART II
THE COMFORTER, OR SPIRIT OF
TRUTH

THE COMFORTER, OR SPIRIT OF TRUTH

Jesus said:—"I will pray the Father and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. . . . He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. . . . These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance whatsoever things I have said unto you. . . . Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. . . . And now I have told you before it comes to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe. . . . It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you. . . . I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth. . . . He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. . . . He shall glorify me; for he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. . . . I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man can take from you."—JOHN xiv, xv, and xvi.

THE COMFORTER, OR SPIRIT OF TRUTH

MANIFESTATIONS OF THE COMFORTER

I

BEFORE treating of the phenomena designated "manifestations of the Holy Ghost," it may be well to recapitulate briefly the experiences that preceded this later revelation.

Having died on the cross, Jesus rose again; and for the space of forty days was manifested, at intervals, not as an angel, or spirit, but as a man; that is, in a natural state of being. His words (John xx: 17) imply that he had "not yet ascended" into heaven. There was nothing in the manifestation to indicate that a spiritual change had taken place through dissolution. He

rose again with the same personality; with the same mind as to its interests and affections; and apparently with the same body, bearing at first the recognizable marks that served to identify him as the same Jesus who was crucified. In the earlier manifestations these characteristics were observable, and they served for his outward identification.

But associated with these familiar features of his person were certain powers peculiar to the change that was wrought by death; the risen Jesus could render his person visible and palpable, or invisible and impalpable, at will; while the form itself was variously manifested, according to his purpose. He emerged, as it were, from the unseen in the presence of witnesses, "the doors being shut," and vanished from their sight; revealing by these changes a control over the elements in which his organic personality was outwardly conditioned.

Nevertheless there was in the manifesta-

tion no indication that Jesus had risen, through dissolution, above a natural state of being; there was no radiancy, or "glory," associated with the phenomena. Contrasted with the dazzling splendor of his subsequent manifestation to Paul in the way,¹ or with the radiancy of angelic beings as elsewhere described,² the manifestations of the forty days' interval between his death and ascension into heaven were earthly in character and, on more than one occasion, physical in form; preternatural, but not supernatural—not spiritual, as this term is rightly discriminated. Jesus himself directed the minds of his disciples to this fact when he said, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."³

The phenomena of the resurrection seem to indicate that the purpose of the risen Christ, during the interval between his death and his ascension into heaven, was

¹ Acts xxvi: 13, 14.

² Rev. i: 16.

³ Luke xxiv: 39.

to reveal, by his manifestations from the unseen, personal immortality and the natural conditions of the after-life; to disclose, incidentally, to the minds of his followers the substantial reality of that invisible intermediate world, or state of being, between the earthly and the heavenly. During this period there were no further spiritual teachings given to his followers; the abnormal character of the manifestation doubtless precluded this; for as physical manifestations from the unseen the phenomena were, strictly speaking, normal to neither world. Their purpose has been sufficiently indicated as the revelation of a state of being intervening between dissolution and the soul's ascension into heaven.

II

We come now to the consideration of that personality which, at the end of the forty days, "ascended into heaven."

Existence, as applied to being, is in-

separable from personality of some kind. In the mind of Christ this is strikingly manifest in contradistinction to abstract ideas that conceive of the Deity as an impersonal "power which makes for righteousness"; but every reference Jesus made to his "Father in heaven" implied a personal Being whose attributes were reflected in himself.

The revelation of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus discloses the persistence of the human personality throughout all worlds. There is likewise revealed by this means a further distinction of natural and spiritual personalities, resting in a distinction of soul and spirit. These terms are often used indiscriminately, as if designating a single fundamental principle, or essence in the constitution of man. But the teaching of scripture affirms that "the word of the Lord parteth asunder soul and spirit":¹ that is, the revelation of a spiritual or divine essence shows the soul to be

¹ Heb. iv: 12.

exterior to this as a fundamental human principle.

III

Natural and spiritual personalities are commonly designated "man" and "angel": man is outwardly organized in physical conditions; while an angel, or spirit, is outwardly organized in psychical conditions; both these series of conditions, though utterly unlike, are "material" in substance, and are therefore of the order of nature in their respective worlds, or spheres, as may be discerned in the light of revelation.

It has been held by many that man was originally created a spiritual being, that he fell from that divine estate, and that a spiritual principle slumbers in the soul awaiting its reawakening to life. But a clearer discernment of the symbols of revelation marks the distinction of soul and Spirit as standing for the human and the

divine; and that the former is created with a capacity for the reception of the divine when man is "born of the Spirit,"¹ or "born of God." For the process of creation is an act of becoming:—"To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God";² and this distinction is further marked in the teaching of Paul respecting the order of creation:—"First the natural; afterward, then that which is spiritual; the first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven: and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."³

This distinction, of natural and spiritual personalities, is essential to a proper understanding of what follows: for the natural personality is fundamentally psychic, or human; but the spiritual personality is fundamentally spiritual, or divine: even as implied when Jesus prayed to the Father,

¹ John iii: 2-9.

² John i: 12-14.

³ I Cor. xv: 46-49.

when about to die, "Glorify thou me with thine own self."¹

IV

To mark the distinction of natural and spiritual personalities in the Christ, as "Son of man" and "Holy Ghost," it may be well to recall some of the characteristics of the former. Jesus was loved as a teacher long before his disciples were convinced that he was their Lord, the Son of God.² He abode with them in human fellowship, "going in and out among them" in daily intercourse. As friend with friend one "leaned upon his bosom while they sat at meat";³ he wept with his friends who mourned,⁴ and opened to them "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"⁵—sometimes in a phenomenal way.⁶ He taught his followers how to commune with God,⁷

¹ John xvii: 5.

² Luke xxii: 70-71.

³ John xiii: 23.

⁴ John xi: 35.

⁵ Matt. xiii: 11.

⁶ Luke ix: 28-37.

⁷ Matt. vi: 7-13.

and revealed to them the nature of the heavenly life by parables the meaning of which they discerned at a later day.¹ They felt that in him God drew nigh to them; that the divine was actually present in him: they who discerned this perceived in his words and acts a revelation of the Father. He was thus for them a Comforter, as to his natural personality, disclosing to their minds and hearts "the way, the truth, and the life";² and when about to die, he said:—"I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter . . . that he may abide with you forever."³

V

By his ascension into heaven in bodily form, as manifested to his followers in a symbol at the end of the forty days, Jesus disclosed to their minds the truth that even in that final, or celestial state, the human invests the divine in the form of a

¹ Matt. xiii.

² John xiv: 6.

³ John xiv: 16-18.

spiritual personality, otherwise unknowable had it not been thus manifested; from this the inference may be drawn that there is, in that celestial state, a corresponding outward environment transcendent to earthly conceptions yet nevertheless capable of being spiritually discerned—as affirmed by Paul.¹ With reference to his heavenly manifestations Jesus said, “The Son of Man shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s”;² that is, the manifestation will be both psychic and spiritual, both human and divine. For a manifestation of the divine Spirit, “whom no man hath seen, nor can see,”³ is impossible of apprehension by the earthly mind except through this psychic means, “the Son of man in heaven”; and this also is implied in the words: “No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son . . . he hath revealed him.”⁴

¹ 2 Cor. xii: 2-4; 1 Cor. ii: 9-10.

² Luke ix: 26.

³ 1 Tim. vi: 16.

⁴ John i: 18.

VI

The heavenly manifestations of the Christ differ from the manifestations of the "forty days" inasmuch as their outward form is psychic, never addressing the physical sense: that is, when the manifestation is personal. But there are varieties of phenomena, originally classed as "manifestations of the Holy Ghost," which proceed from a heavenly source through outward instrumentalities that are cognizable by the physical sense; but these are not personal, they are "signs" and "tokens" of spiritual things; of such a nature were the initial phenomena by that means, as thus described:—"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues of flame, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of

them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."¹

VII

It is noticeable in the scriptures that all reference to "manifestations of the Holy Ghost," as distinguished from spiritual communion in the heart and in the conscience, is associated with phenomena capable of being sensibly cognized; either as an instrumentality, or by its outward effects; the following may serve for illustration:—"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed with them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then they laid their hands on

¹ Acts ii: 1-5.

them, and they received the Holy Ghost"¹—elsewhere indicated by “speaking with tongues, and prophesyings.”

This implies something superadded to their reception of “the word of God,” which is spiritual; something addressing the outer consciousness, even as its communication was outward—through “the laying on of hands.” The declaration that thereupon “they received the Holy Ghost” was grounded in some sensible form of evidence apparent to the observers.² A purely spiritual influence is not thus manifested, but is a matter of the inward experience. What these believers received by these means was something added, *ab extra*, to what may be conceived as purely spiritual; for the latter is not tactually conveyable, but concerns the heart of the believer—as distinguished by Paul in the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, 1-4. This tactual means is for the conveyance

¹ Acts viii: 14-18.

² Acts viii: 18-19, and x: 44-47.

of psychic "power" as a channel for the spiritual; and is commonly employed in the earlier stages of this intercourse, among mystics, as an initial act when two or three are met together for this communion.

VIII

What originally was designated "the power," in modern terms has been variously designated magnetism, mesmerism, hypnotism, etc.—which terms explain nothing, but serve merely to indicate various outward phases of a psychic force, not in the least degree spiritual. There is a distinction to be noted, however, in the study of these psychic phenomena, as to whether they are regarded simply as abnormal forces or effects; or, in their higher forms, as a means susceptible of being developed as an instrumentality for conscious communion with the unseen. This distinction was clearly indicated by Paul, in discriminating "spiritual gifts," when he said that he

would "rather speak five words with the understanding, than ten thousand words in a tongue. . . . Tongues," he said, "are for a sign, not to them which believe, but to them that believe not; but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe."¹ The apostle eventually discerned the various nature of these psychic phenomena as instrumentalities; as a possible channel for higher things; and among his followers he undertook to regulate their service in the light of reason, as a means for "revelations" and spiritual teachings designated "prophesyings"; emanating from the unseen through conscious communion.

IX

It may be well to define, in the light of the later revelation, what is the significance of "prophecy"; as there is a distinction to be noted in the scriptural uses of this

¹ 1 Cor. xiv: 19-22.

term. Prophecy, in the sense of prediction, is but incidental to its larger meaning as inspirational teachings from a heavenly source, often verbally communicated. In the Old Testament the prediction of events by prophecy was with reference to their fulfillment in time; in the New Testament the promised revelation of "the things to come," the function of the Comforter, is strictly with reference to the spiritual life, or "kingdom of Heaven." Prophecyings, therefore, are inspirational teachings by a conscious means of intercourse with the unseen, designated in the Apostles' Creed "the communion of saints"—the spiritual-minded who have passed into the heavens. Through this order of communion, when under a heavenly inspiration, the spiritual consciousness is specifically enlightened, according to the promise of Jesus concerning the Comforter; namely, that "He will guide into all truth and reveal the things to come";¹ for these

¹ John xvi: 13.

communings, when proceeding from a heavenly source, are all under that ministration.

X

A spiritual consciousness is not developed arbitrarily, or miraculously; it is a matter of gradual enlightenment; and is greatly aided by this conscious spiritual communion and the study of the scriptures: for as enlightenment on the natural plane is dependent on the acquisition of knowledge, so is spiritual enlightenment dependent on revelation and prophecy, as supplying the data for this development, especially in its initial stages; the coming of the Messiah implies this necessity, "That they might have life, and have it more abundantly."¹

While discriminating herein the phenomenal side of revelation and prophecy—disclosed by manifestations bringing to

¹ 1 John x: 10.

light by an external means, designated "power," that which could not otherwise have been known except it were thus revealed—these instrumentalities are nevertheless all clearly distinguishable, even in their higher forms, from that purely spiritual communion which follows when, as the scripture says, "God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father."¹ For there is then imparted to the human soul that "gift of the Spirit" which establishes in the heart of the believer a direct spiritual relationship and communion between the human and the divine. But until this "day-star" arises in the heart, it is said that there is "a sure word of prophecy, of which it is well to take heed, as a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn,"² otherwise there is little to build upon for the development of a spiritual consciousness.

¹ Gal. iv: 6.

² 2 Peter i: 19.

XI

The scriptures indicate that there are aids and instrumentalities available, under the dispensation of the heavenly Christ, that tend directly toward this spiritual enlightenment when rightly used; not as ends in themselves, but as a means, or channel for conscious heavenly communion: such were those phenomena originally designated "prophesyings" and "manifestations of the Holy Ghost," of which the following example is given: When Paul came to Ephesus he found there a group of disciples of John the Baptist, to whom he said, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they answered him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. . . . And when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."¹

Here was added to that ethical teaching

¹ Acts xix: 1-7.

received from John, including, doubtless, a knowledge of the historic Christ, something of which these believers were hitherto in ignorance; something apparently communicable by the touch, irrespective of any change of heart; disclosing some unseen agency, or "power," that was recognizable by its outward effects, and discerned as available for conscious communion with the unseen through "prophesyings." The laying on of hands for communicating "the power" was followed by some form of sensible phenomena, which the apostle eventually discerned as susceptible of development; passing from an outward, to a more inward form of manifestation: "Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts," he says, "seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." Paul advised that if one possessed an elementary gift, as of "tongues, let him pray that he may interpret, that the understanding may be fruitful." And in furtherance of this end, he adds, "When ye assemble together, if

all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned [in the mystery], or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad? But if ye prophesy and there come in an unbeliever, or one ignorant [of these things], he is reproved, he is judged; the secrets of his heart are made known."¹

XII

It is needless to specify what this signifies in the light of the modern experience of these psychic gifts, of which the above gives an accurate description, tempered with a wise discrimination. Paul clearly indicates that the gift was susceptible of development; passing from a lower, or elementary psychic stage, to that of a higher, or spiritual form of intelligence—"to the edifying of the church."

A careful study of these phenomena, and of Paul's attitude of mind toward them,

¹ I Cor. xiv. The chapter is largely concerned with the instrumentalities of revelation and prophecy.

will show them to be a means of conscious communion with the unseen; whereby not only "the secrets of the heart are made known," but in their higher forms they may become, as implied in the scriptures, the channel of conscious heavenly communion.

But before passing on to the higher forms it will be well to discriminate further the elementary psychic stage of these gifts; not only of "tongues"—which are often incoherent, though sometimes actual speech in a language unknown to the one giving utterance to it—but a still more elementary form of phenomena is mentioned by Paul, as "things without life giving forth sounds";¹ which the apostle regarded as wholly unprofitable. And yet he recognizes that these elementary phenomena belong to the initial stage of a channel of conscious psychic intercourse with the unseen, distinguished only by the uses made of it: something not to be accorded any sacredness in itself, save when employed for

¹ 1 Cor. xiv: 7.

spiritual, or divine, communion in response to the highest and purest aspirations of the human heart.

XIII

For it is plainly implied in the scriptures that this same instrumentality, which may be divinely used, is alike available for a trifling, or unprofitable, intercourse with the unseen, when its possible higher service is not discerned; and St. John advises those believers who would avail themselves of this means of communion, to "try the spirits,"¹ suggesting a certain test for determining whether they be "of God"—that is, spiritual-minded—otherwise they are "false prophets." Whatever be its claim therefore, the product of such intercourse should be judged solely by its intrinsic character and inward spirit, for determining its true source and merit; as when Paul says, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?"² In short, the product

¹ 1 John iv: 1.

² 1 Cor. vi: 3.

should be discriminated by that same enlightened judgment which determined what was spiritually inspired, from what was apocryphal, in forming the canon of New Testament scriptures.

XIV

A growing intelligence in the light of the modern experience of these gifts, discerning their lower and higher service, will result in their proper discrimination, distinguishing clearly the psychical from the spiritual. Paul refers to "the abundance of the revelations"¹ that were given him, and to the variety of his "gifts"—in reply to those who regarded these things as the credentials of apostleship; but he himself did not so regard them; the "sanctification of the Spirit"² was his sole credential of authority for his teaching, and it is the only real authority in the religious life. Whatever came to the apostle by these psychic

¹ 2 Cor. xii: 7.

² Thes. ii: 13.

instrumentalities he endeavored to interpret in terms that would address the understanding and assist in the development of a spiritual consciousness; if they failed in this they were as nothing. He clearly distinguishes these psychic gifts, even in their higher forms, from that "fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance"¹—for these are "manifestations of the Spirit" indeed.

But originally, for designating these preternatural experiences, the term "manifestations of the Holy Ghost" was sometimes applied indiscriminately to a variety of psychic phenomena which had the appearance of being supernatural, or miraculous; and while Sts. Paul and John eventually were able to distinguish their various sources, it is for the growing intelligence of man to discriminate these still further in the light of the modern experience.

¹ Gal. v: 22-23.

XV.

For a clearer discernment of the true nature of these various instrumentalities, serving as a channel for revelation and prophecy, it may be well, before passing on to the consideration of their higher phenomenal phases, to refer briefly to some other subordinate forms, as hinted in the scriptures. In *The Acts* is given an example of an obsession by this means; indicating the influence of a foolish, rather than evil-disposed spirit; whose persistent reiteration, "continued for many days,"¹ annoyed, or "troubled" Paul; who was doubtless uncertain how he should deal with a spirit affirming the truth, though unwisely; but eventually he released the maid from its influence. Later on, this apostle discerned that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets";² that is, they do not take arbitrary possession, but respect the minds of those with whom they are in

¹ Acts xiv: 16-19. (R. V.) ² 1 Cor. xiv: 32.

association, aiding and working in unison with them.

Another distinction is marked in the following:—In his journey into Asia, Paul was delayed at Tyre; “and finding disciples he tarried there seven days, who said to Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem.”¹ It is important, in this case, to discern whether the term “Spirit,” as printed in the text, is rightly or wrongly capitalized; whether it refers to the Holy Spirit, or whether it designates some inferior spirit; that it was the latter, in this case, is implied by Paul’s disregard of the injunction; for by this time the apostle was able to distinguish communications by this means as of various character, emanating from divers sources; and he refused to yield his judgment to their dictation. He therefore gave no heed to the command, obeying by preference the dictate of his own conscience. In short, Paul was able to distinguish between the

¹ Ac^ts xxi: 4-15.

Spirit that prompted him to go to Jerusalem,¹ and the spirit communing through these Tyrian disciples which commanded him not to go. Another similar instance is given in his meeting with "a certain prophet named Agabus,"² who foretold what should befall him at Jerusalem.

XVI

Other phases of "the power," often communicable by the touch, were conspicuous in the cures effected by Jesus: one who secretly touched him "with faith to be healed" by that means, withdrew from him some force, or "virtue,"³ capable of producing marked physical effects. Sometimes this was communicated by the fixed attention of the eye, reinforced by a command; as in the case of the healing of a deformed person by Peter and John: "Peter, fastening his eyes on him, with John, said, Look on us! . . . In the

¹ Gal. ii: 1-2.

² Acts xxi: 10-13.

³ Mark v: 30.

name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.”¹

This steadfastly looking at the person to be healed, and directing him to look on them, and taking him by the hand, established conditions for the magnetic force and spiritual will-power, exercised in the Spirit of Christ, to operate in as a healing means through faith. The same instrumentality is indicated in another curing of a cripple: “Paul, fastening his eyes on him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, said in a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet! And he leaped up, and walked.”² The loud voice of command is often specified in such cases, as in the raising of Lazarus.³ It is said of Paul

¹ Acts iii: 4-9.

² Acts xiv: 9-11.

³ John xi: 43.

himself, after he had been stoned, "The people supposing him to be dead, drew him out of the city. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city."¹ This standing about the person to be healed, and the union of the wills of all in prayer, as a means of drawing down "power" from above, is commonly reported of faith-cures in all ages. That this power is available in like conditions, when reinforced by a will that is free from doubt and united to higher powers, is implied in the teaching of Jesus: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also."²

While this faith was still fervid, though "but as a grain of mustard seed,"³ the immediate followers of Jesus likewise exercised the same powers; but when eventually faith became an historic tradition, a merely doctrinal or dogmatic form of teaching and belief, it lost its virtue: for

¹ Acts xiv: 19-20.

² John xiv: 12.

³ Matt. xvii: 20.

its efficacy lies in a "faith in God"¹ that is individual and personal, like the faith of Jesus. Like conditions are requisite for the exercise of like powers; and in the spiritual world, not less than in the natural world, these conditions are imperative.

Having indicated some of the varieties of the means, or instrumentalities, included in manifestations of "the power," it remains to consider that which is more distinctly spiritual and personal in this conscious intercourse with the unseen through "manifestations of the Holy Ghost."

XVII]

Conscious verbal communion with the heavenly Christ is implied in certain passages in *The Acts*, as in the following:—
"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."² This indicates an

¹ Mark xi: 22-23.

² Acts xiii: 2.

expression of the will of the Holy Ghost by a direct verbal communication, and not merely by subconsciously illumining the minds of the disciples. A similar order of verbal communication is implied by the words used in the letter of the apostles and elders, commending Paul and Barnabas to the brethren at Antioch and elsewhere—“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things,”¹ etc. This manner of speaking of the Holy Ghost as having given a conscious expression of opinion apart from the minds of the apostles—as of two that agreed—is significant; for such words could never have been used had the manifestation been a subjective blending of two minds as one through a purely spiritual influence; the words plainly imply an outward communion of thought by some conscious means, through which the mind of the Paraclete was verbally expressed. (See Acts xvi: 6-7,

¹ Acts xv: 28.

R. V., which identifies the Holy Ghost with "the Spirit of Jesus.")

XVIII

Again, Paul narrates the following:—
"And it came to pass, that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance, and saw him, saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: because they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee. . . . And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles."¹ And again: they brought "Paul, a prisoner, into the castle. And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."²

¹ Acts xxii: 17-21. (R. V.)

² Acts xxiii: 11.

Elsewhere Paul affirms: "The Holy Ghost testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me"¹—here again, however, it is questionable whether the term "Holy Ghost" is correctly applied.

Again, the following is recorded of this apostle:—"And the Lord said unto Paul in the night, by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city."² While of his first experience of this conscious visitation of the heavenly Christ, the manifestation being dazzling "beyond the brightness of the sun at noonday," the apostle says:—"I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

¹ Acts xx: 23. (R. V.)

² Acts xviii: 9-10.

But rise up, and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes that they may turn from darkness to light, ”¹ etc. There are other implied verbal communications from the same source: as, for example, when the institution of the Eucharist, as Paul affirmed, was imparted to this apostle, and with greater fullness than is given in the Gospels:² and on another occasion, when significant hints were given in reply to Paul’s request for the removal of “a thorn in the flesh; to which the Lord gave answer, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”³

¹ Acts xxvi: 12-19.

² 1 Cor. xi: 23-29.

³ 2 Cor. xii: 7-10.

XIX

These examples of verbal communion are quoted at some length in illustration of their varied character, and of their intimate, personal, and specific significance with reference to Paul's actions and thoughts; even to his personal request, during the manifestation, for the removal of a physical infirmity. They are not such expressions as the imagination would have been likely to associate with a heavenly manifestation—as for instance the implied image of the ox driven by a goad: they hold, in fact, that internal evidence of truth which is seldom, or never, according to human anticipations, or imagined conceptions.

The ministrations of the heavenly Christ are revealed in these experiences as both psychic and spiritual, as both human and divine; and he is designated a "Comforter" because he approaches his followers Soul to soul, as well as Spirit to spirit; humanly

as well as divinely, having passed into the heavens touched with the feeling of human infirmities.¹

The initial signs, as on the day of Pentecost, were preliminary to a more spiritual and personal form of manifestation to the individual consciousness; as experienced by Stephen in the moment of his martyrdom;² by Paul in the way;³ by John at Patmos;⁴ and by Francis of Assisi and others; these were visible and audible alone to the psychic senses of the individuals referred to. Purely spiritual manifestation, as in the Beatific Vision, is Spirit to spirit; by a transcendent means of approach that is only possible in the spiritual consciousness when the soul is "caught up," or temporarily freed from the veil of the flesh in a state of trance—as when Paul affirms he was "caught up into the third heaven and heard unspeakable words, impossible to utter."

¹ Heb. iv: 15.

³ Acts ix: 3-6.

² Acts viii: 56.

⁴ Rev. i: 1,

XX

Manifestations of the Holy Ghost are designated in the scriptures "a joy and comfort to them which believe";¹ because they make conscious to the soul what hitherto was subconscious; and "they are given to profit withal";² that is, to refresh the heart and renew and strengthen heavenly aspirations. They demonstrate to the spiritual consciousness the reality of the unseen, and give to faith and hope the assurance of substantial realization in fulfillment of the promise that "He will guide into all truth and reveal the things to come."

The pains taken by Jesus, in the manifestations of the resurrection and ascension, to reveal the persistence of the human personality in the intermediate and heavenly states, is significant; for it is through this personality, "himself man,"³ that a

¹ Acts ix: 31; Rom. xiv: 17.

² I Cor. xii: 7.

³ I Tim. ii: 5 (R. V.).

means, or "mediator," is provided for making conscious to his followers, at times, that which otherwise could not be known except it were thus manifested. For a revelation by manifestation enables the mind to grasp spiritual things as realities addressing the understanding; and qualifies it to distinguish this personal means, through the ministry of the Comforter—including the subordinate instrumentalities of "angels [messengers] and ministering spirits"—from that otherwise subconscious Spirit of the Father, which cannot be known until spiritually discerned. As preparatory to this, for gradually implanting in them a spiritual consciousness, the followers of Christ were first approached, as on the day of Pentecost, through an outward psychic means that arrested attention and addressed the outward understanding. This was also the experience of Paul in the way, while persecuting the followers of Jesus; and of Francis of Assisi while still leading a profligate life. This

is not so exceptional as is generally supposed; for Jesus himself said that "the sign of the Son of man in heaven"¹ shall come, "as a snare, upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth":² whether it arrests attention, or is disregarded, is a matter of individual concern; for it may be easily explained away and forgotten.

XXI

The discernment of many of these truths by Paul was through a gradual and progressive enlightenment on his part under this heavenly ministration of the Christ, especially emphasized in *The Acts* and in the *Epistles* where reference is made to "spiritual gifts" and phenomenal "manifestations." While laying far greater stress on that which is wholly spiritual, as concerning the heart and the life, the apostle nevertheless did not disregard

¹ Matt. xxiv: 30.

² Luke xxi: 35.

instrumentalities that were susceptible of development as a channel for "prophesyings," or verbal heavenly communion—whether oral, or written, by this means. He cautions his followers that they "despise not prophesyings; but prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."¹ For without these psychic instrumentalities there could be no actual disclosure of "the things to come"; no means for enlightening the mind as to immortality and human destiny; and no "communion of saints"²—as originally understood. The incarnation itself implies this organic necessity, and is a comprehensive verification and vindication of it through the instrumentality of the natural and spiritual personalities of the Christ as "Son of man" and "Holy Ghost."

XXII

When referring to that spiritual personality, to quote his own words, "Whom

¹ I Thess. v : 20.

² Apostles' Creed.

the Father will send in my name,"¹ Jesus spoke, as it were, in the third person; as referring to that which his followers could not then comprehend: even as Paul said of himself, "I knew a man in Christ, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth; how that he was caught up into the third heaven. . . . I knew such a man . . . how that he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words, impossible for a man to utter."² And in like manner Jesus referred to that promised heavenly Comforter as another personality, and yet his own, but "glorified"—the heavenly Christ. While on earth, for the conveyance of spiritual truths, in opening the spiritual perceptions of his followers, Jesus was obliged to teach them by parable; but he promised that a time would come when, to quote his own words, he said, "I will no more speak unto you in proverbs, but will show

¹ John xiv : 26.

² 2 Cor. xii: 2-4. See verse 5.

you plainly of the Father.”¹ For after his ascension into heaven, and they had themselves received the Spirit (as pre-figured after he had risen, when “he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit.”²), Christ could then approach his followers by an inward communion, Spirit to spirit; when all figurative, or phenomenal, forms of communion would be dispensed with.

While therefore the historic Christ was a Comforter approaching his followers on the natural plane; revealing divine things as manifested in himself—in his own earthly experience and teaching—Jesus intimated that “another Comforter” would be required to “guide them into all truth and reveal the things to come.”³ For it is through the revelation of heavenly things that spiritual aspirations are kindled in the soul; without which they never would be aroused except in the form of mysti-

¹ John xvi : 25.

² John xx : 22.

³ John xvi : 13.

cal emotion, without a knowledge of the truth.

These successive revelations, by the risen Jesus and the heavenly Christ, disclose the pathway of the soul's progress from the earthly to the heavenly life; not only through a subconscious spiritual means, but sometimes by personal manifestation and conscious verbal communion; by which spiritual truths are brought to the outward understanding; giving them additional power and potency when thus made apprehensible as things capable of being definitely known.¹ And while Jesus, as the Christ of God, is the supreme revelator, through the power and personality of the Holy Ghost, "revealing the things to come," there are many subordinate instrumentalities, adapted to various grades of intelligence, which may at times be divinely employed, even in their elementary forms, as "signs" and "tokens" to induce a belief in the hereafter: whether this is to the

¹ *Thess. ii: 13.*

profit, or detriment, of a spiritual consciousness, rests with the motive and mind of the individual inquirer; for "Virtue is free, the chooser is answerable, God is justified."

XXIII

Many other examples might be given, from both the Old and New Testament scriptures, in illustration of the nature of the instrumentalities employed for revelation and prophecy; examples that distinguish plainly between "man's wisdom"¹ and "revelations of the Spirit"; indicating likewise the organic means for the transmission of the latter when consciously manifested. But enough has been said to suggest their varied character and objective reality: for to a spiritual consciousness the psychical is not less truly objective than the physical.

That the "ministry of angels and spirits"

¹ 1 Cor. ii : 4.

is by an organic means, and that these instrumentalities of revelation are outwardly psychic, is a truth that must be recognized before it is possible to apprehend the nature of that heavenly or divine communion through the power and personality of the Holy Ghost. The testimony running through the whole body of scripture is concurrent as to the organic means of revelation and prophecy; and this concurrence, covering vast periods of time and unconsciously attested by innumerable witnesses, rests on no mere figure of speech, but on facts objectively discerned. The angelic agencies employed as "messengers" are not less distinctly organic than are the mind and senses of the prophet who is the recipient of these things. The prophet invariably discerns these instrumentalities as living personalities; and he reports their acts and words as things "seen and heard." By this conscious means the prophet was enabled to distinguish revelation and prophecy from that subconscious spiritual

influence which is ceaseless throughout all worlds, but is otherwise incapable of being discriminated from the spontaneous operation of the human mind.¹

The record of scripture makes no distinction between words heard psychically, and sounds addressing the physical sense; the former are just as sonorous as the latter while the psychic senses are "opened,"—this truth finds definite illustration in "the call of Samuel,"² as well as in Paul's experience, previously noted. And similarly the psychic sight is not less real, to say the least, than is the physical sight, discerning as objective "the things that were shown." Ezekiel says of his experience, "I beheld the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord: and when I saw it I fell down upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake. And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee." Then followed a change in the order of mani-

¹ Numbers 22 : 38.

² 1 Samuel iii : 4-10.

festation, the vision was merged into prophesyings:—"And the spirit entered into me when he spake with me, and set me upon my feet: and I heard him that spake unto me."¹ The spirit who showed Ezekiel the vision by opening his psychic senses then took possession of the vocal organs of the prophet and gave verbal expression to his message, saying, "Thus saith the Lord," etc. The prophet narrates the following as plain matter of fact: "The spirit lifted me up and took me away":² even as the soul of Paul was "caught up" out of the body.³

XXIV

Studied in the light of related knowledge arbitrary miracle disappears and the means, or instrumentalities, of revelation and prophecy are found to be organic throughout; dependent on a series of living

¹ Ezekiel i : 28 and ii : 1-2.

² Ezekiel iii : 14.

³ 2 Cor. xii : 2-4.

agents—"angels and ministering spirits"¹—for transmitting divine teachings by an outward channel, or conscious means, before they are spiritually discerned "face to face." In the New Testament this organic means is indicated in the following:—"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all the things that he saw."^{2 3}

¹ Heb. i : 14.

² Rev. i:1-2.

³ Note: The ministry of Angels in the life of Christ is specified as follows:—The Angel of the Annunciation: Luke i : 26-38; the Angel that appeared to Joseph, Matt. i : 20; The vision of Angels seen by the shepherds: Luke ii : 8-17; the Angel directing the flight into Egypt: Matt. ii : 13; the ministry of Angels after the temptation: Mark i : 13; Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration; "an Angel strengthening him" in Gethsemane: Luke xxii : 43; the Angels at the sepulchre: Matt. xxviii : 1-4; Mark xvi : 5-6; Luke xxiv : 7-8 and John xx : 12, 13; the two Angels at the Ascension: Acts i : 10, 11.

Not only is the instrumentality by organic contact, but later revelations of spiritual truths must necessarily be linked to former revelations, often employing similar forms of expression; for this spiritual continuity is just as imperative as is the organic connection; thus is the New Testament revelation distinctly related to the promises and prophesyings¹ of the Old Testament; one order of revelation serving to interpret and illuminate the other. There could be no progress in spiritual enlightenment without this spiritual continuity; and no prophet can be a "true prophet" of heavenly things except his mind is already familiar with, and reverences as a reality, the divine communion of the past.

The impulse of John to worship the angelic messenger was repelled by the words:—"See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets;"² while the appearance of Moses

¹ Rom. xv : 8 and Heb. vi : 12 and 2 Peter i : 4.

² Rev. xix : 10 and xxii : 8-9.

and Elias in communion with Jesus on the mount, advising him of his approaching crucifixion at Jerusalem,¹ likewise indicates this organic necessity and spiritual continuity for outward revelations; even when proceeding from a heavenly, or divine source.

XXV

Nevertheless while, for a specific purpose with reference to what follows in Part III, emphasis has herein been laid on the nature of the organic instrumentalities that constitute a channel of revelation and prophecy, eliminating the miraculous, Paul distinctly cautions his associates against an undue estimate of the phenomenal, the intellectual,² and even that which may be a direct offspring of faith, in comparison with that which proceeds from the heart—“out of which are the issues of life”³—

¹ Luke ix : 30-31.

² Col. ii : 8.

³ Prov. iv : 23.

manifested in the love of God and man. After referring specifically to these outward instrumentalities for spiritual enlightenment, which he counseled are to be desired,¹ and are not to be despised,² he adds:—
“And yet I show unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.”³

¹ I Cor. xiv : 1.

² I Thess. v : 20.

³ I Cor. xii : 31 and xiii : 1-2.

PART III
REVELATION AND THE LIFE TO
COME

[The writings that follow are extracts from the record of a series of experiences extending, at intervals, over several years—from 1881 to 1886. The record from which these selections are made is a direct verbal product, or deposit, of these experiences, by a means indicated in the Appendix.

These writings are of the nature of a revelation of the life to come: in their higher spiritual forms they are of the character of what were formerly termed “prophesyings” and “manifestations of the Spirit.” They will be found to contain within themselves all that is needful to a clear perception of their true source and significance.]

TRUTH REVEALED

* * *

[When "the power" was established, and the hand brought under control by the invisible guiding influence, the following was written:]

. . . "If you abandon yourselves to the influence you may extend your life into our world and share in the pure light of Spirit, but when absorbed in temporal things you are separated from us as by an impassable wall. We would pour into your hearts the Light of Day, the brightness of that spiritual light which enfolds the earnest seeker—for are not we your ministering spirits? But often are we compelled to drive back into the sanctuary of thought our desires for you.

"In the light that now shines on you through this communion is already fulfilled for you the promise of a new heaven

and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. For you may now look back on the time when you gazed intently into the future as if there alone lay your hope, while around you, unperceived, was a possible, a real heaven. Cherish especially the thought of a present Eternity; it will refine and uplift the mind, and give a meaning and use to every thought and act. Live always in the Light, for they to whom God is an ever-shining Sun will reap a rich harvest of blessing in this vale of struggle, as well as in the brightness of the Heavenly Land. The lesson which abides with us here, is that of realising, continually, the presence of God, in us and about us. For they who are born of the Spirit are already at home in the Father's House; and if it be but the lower rooms we are in, nevertheless it is the Father's House."

[In reply to a question.]

"We all stand on the shores of a boundless sea; we see in one light, you in another; the infinite is equally before us in this life,

as in yours. Even as your eyes are dim, and your hands feeble, so the veil of our imperfection is suspended between us and the vast unknown. We press forward, and still a beyond lies before us. With constant endeavor we grasp, and it eludes us, but something remains to bless us as a foundation for more."

Are you permitted to reveal sacred things, as in the past?

"Until the time is at hand for a distinct revelation, before it becomes possible for it to be a revelation, and after the ground is prepared, then, and only then, will He who sows come, and give the good gift. We know this to be true from experience. The Light, were it shown you without a preparation of mind and heart, would be too strong for you to bear, and God shows His mercy no less in withholding the Light than in bringing you into it. In His infinite mercy He will open your eyes day by day until you shall be prepared to receive His own words, by His own Messengers, those

who come out from His immediate Presence. While you thus wait the Life is poured into your souls, and in a moment your growth in grace may be greater than you can know.

“We see clearly that man’s only hope of Life is by patiently enduring, through faith, until he shall receive the blessing which comes from God speaking to the soul directly; and if you listen to this inner voice, and obey its dictates, you will make a greater advance than you can measure. For God’s own word, that speaks to you through the heart, is surer than any voice which may be heard; surer than spoken words, for in these you have but the interpretation of the thought, while with God’s voice in the conscience you have His words free from any impurity, which is mixed with all outward expression. . . .

“When you have once seen the Light then the Spirit opens your minds to the apprehension of spiritual truths in a way

that was before impossible; then your true life has begun, then you are numbered among God's children and are heirs of immortality.

“The life of the Spirit is a progressive life, requiring continually the food from heaven to bring it to perfection. This food is the Light of Life; and this is that Light which God Himself, through the operation of the Spirit, gives to man; to each as he asks, to each one as he lays himself open to the Influence, which may come to him in great abundance. No man need be without this Light, for it is the Great Inheritance, the common inheritance of man. When you come into this Light you may then recognise a power of thought to which the natural man is blinded. It bids you see for the first time. It calls you to take possession of your birthright and become the being your Eternal Father has destined you to be. Then, and then only, can you be said to live, to live as unto God.

“By a constant endeavor to discern those things which make for righteousness you may walk in the Spirit in many ways which are the fulfilment of the promises of God. Happy are they who dwell continually in His presence, for their life is real, and they shall abide forever in His kingdom and be the means of conveying to others words of Eternal Life.”

* * *

[NOVEMBER 5, 1882.]

It was written :

. . . “Remember that the gift is not yours, but in you. Regard it as a sacred trust, for the benefit of others as well as for yourselves. . . . Calmness of mind is necessary for the development of these powers, and in preparation for the life that awaits you when the flesh is laid down. Do not fear shocks, either physical, or mental; if accepted calmly they may be regarded as steps in the onward movement of the spirit. Growth is gradual; in order to last it must be so; but crises occur in all lives. . . .

“We shall on this occasion be the means of conveying to you words from which life and hope may be born. The messenger will choose his own hour, but we are assured

that before we leave you we shall have his words, for this is the urgent call that has brought us together now. . . .

“It is but seldom, and as a great and precious blessing, for a special purpose, that the Saints commune with men. Our means of drawing to us the great and pure spirits is by love and veneration. We dwell much on the power of love, for it is the greatest force in this world where sympathy is sight. Love, in active exercise, is charity; and here as with you the words are true, that charity covers a multitude of sins. Love descends and broods over the weakness and sorrows of humanity. Love is the ladder by which we climb. Our weaknesses and faults fall away from us insensibly, almost without effort, when for love’s pure sake we are engaged in works of love. We do not then have to strive, or labor with ourselves, but purity comes to us and faults fade away as darkness is dispelled by daylight.

“One of the blessings of this intercourse

is, that love brings us to you and aids us in overcoming the many obstacles encountered in this new path, of communion with mortals. But these very efforts benefit us by strengthening our powers of manifestation in our world, and by drawing us out of ourselves they give us another motive beyond the desire to grow in our own spiritual life. In other ways we are benefited by this intercourse, of which you may gain some knowledge in the effort to raise the thought of those about you to a higher plane. We are closely united with those who, in the Earth-life, strive to do this, and thus are good and great things accomplished.

“We are filled with the earnest desire to aid you in this enlightenment. Use the opportunity, for it is a question of times and seasons, of atmospheric influences, and even the fleshly atoms have something to do with it, or we could not control, as we do, the eyes, the voice, the hand. Fill the mind with spiritual thoughts, dwell upon them when rising up and lying

down. When such thoughts fill your minds you need no assurance that we are beside you. But do not be disappointed if this favorable season should terminate; it cannot be always spring. Cherish what comes, and live on it in times of drought. [*A pause.*]

“A pure and mighty one is near you. Listen!”

[*The writing became slow and measured, as if from dictation.*]

“To you who crave for goodness as the hart pants after the waters I come with words of love and hope and encouragement.

“We, by the mercy and love of God, dwell in the land of light, in the kingdom of endless ages. Here is undying life; here the peace that passeth understanding; here joy wanes not, here beauty withers not, here love grows not cold, for we dwell in the smile of the Face of God.

“We, too, have been as you now are, tossed on the waves of this troublesome world. Now we stand on the eternal

shore and see your peril, as the billows of trial and temptation surge around you. And we hold up to you the light of Love and Truth to guide you home. And we bid you remember that the day is coming, when in you, as in us, patience shall have wrought her perfect work, when hope shall be lost in fruition, and when you, too, shall know the fulness of joy that abides in the Presence of God.'"

* * *

[JANUARY 7, 1883.]

[After reading aloud the words received on the previous occasion, the following was communicated by the writing:]

“You have called us around you by that unfailing summons, sacred to us, as to your mortal ears.

“You should be willing, and prepared, to resign yourselves to the power. For if you give us free scope we can, as you now know, soar with you into the heights of divine blessing, and probe deeply the mystery of the unseen. But a passive receptivity will not suffice. There should be more than willingness to receive; there must be ardent desire corresponding to the boon you seek, and which we are around you to give. We aim to supply all the needful

power. Others, too, of a higher order, are near you, influencing your minds to grow and expand. When you breathe that sacred Message, and when your hearts are in unison, the power called forth is greater than you can know.

“Time has been given that you might take to your hearts words which were to us, as to you, a great and wonderful blessing. No time is lost that is so used, for you gain as much by that means as by direct communion with the spirit world. . . .

“If your desire is for these higher gifts you will have to relinquish the lesser communion for the greater; for many from beyond, of whom you have no knowledge, will come, hoping to influence the expression of truth. The blessing of a higher intercourse will impose on you this voluntary sacrifice as a necessity. But we can give you no higher proof of our love and interest, for thus we take you into the secret thoughts of our life here. We likewise depend on you, for without you we cannot

have the direct words which holy ones from beyond bring for those in your life. . . .

“The light that we may reflect for you is not ours, it is exterior to ourselves, shining through our minds. To bring it within the compass of words, by this means, is our great difficulty. To-night we draw you into our assembled company as longing for the same blessing, in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. All are here; the place is a holy place, for we all await the voice of one who speaks with authority to us and to you alike. One who has ‘heard the voice of God resounding through the ages,’ and who by faith and patience and purity has obtained an unspeakable reward.”

[*By another communing spirit:*] “The old lesson—not he that repeateth the Name, but he that doeth the Will: that was the lesson of the Great Master. That is a lesson for your life, and for ours. Here we learn that Will more fully, but the perfection awaits us in a higher sphere.”

[*By another:*] “Purity and self-sacrifice are the best preparation for the life to come. By self-sacrifice you may practice on Earth, by gradual steps, the work of your future eternal life, which will be a complete and perfect submission to the Will of God. For this is heaven indeed—one will, one desire; no further temptation because all self-will has been uprooted and subdued.

“We grow gradually into this oneness of will, and the earthly stage is all part of the preparation for blessedness hereafter.”

[*After a pause the following was communicated by the writing with great deliberation and calmness, as if by dictation:*]

“Peace, good will to men.

“Peace to the kindred of the saints, on whom shines the dawning of the Day of God.

“Unite your wills to the Will of God, so shall your peace flow as a river, and your purification shall be perfected.

“In this heavenly country, where the

King reigns in His beauty, we follow His will, we are wholly His, for no cloud can separate us from His love. We live only for Him, we abide where He places us, we have no will but His, and He is our God forever and ever.

“ ‘God directs your way for His own glory, which is your highest good. He will have you live and labor for Him, not seeing the fruit of your toil, content to know you are doing His work, that you prepare His way, and plough up the soil of the world for the seed of the future, knowing your record is on high. He makes of your weakness the throne of His mercy, the seat of His omnipotence. To you, and in you, He draws near, and gloom vanishes before His bright presence.

“ ‘We, in His name, strengthen and cheer you with the promise of the home where He in His love and mercy has gathered us, and where He will surely bring all who live in love. There, in the land of eternal spring, of everlasting light, awaits you an inherit-

ance incorruptible, an unfailing treasure, a life of perfect peace. Your waking souls can yet see only in dim vision that land of light, you can look only on the veils of the bliss to be revealed, on the shadows of the heavenly glory that overflows the paradise of God. But look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh, day by day.

“O, blessed, endless eternity, wherein shall grow continually the love of the Holy Will of God.’”

[After a long silence the following was given in reply to questions asked:]

“We know not the name now, but you shall learn it; we also desire to know whence these words which come to us all and help our lives. In the great presence of this night we likewise are listeners, and we also are privileged to be here.

“There need be no pause in our onward and upward journey. Their desire is to strengthen us in this cause, and to renew

us day by day. When we come together again make your preparation by earnest prayer, and the blessing will be given without measure. And remember us in your prayers, for we receive the blessing with you when in harmony.”

[*On a subsequent occasion the following was communicated:*] “He who came is God’s servant, who does His bidding; by him the Spirit of the Most High gains conscious access to your hearts. And by this means we receive strength, which only comes when God speaks to His children on Earth. When He shall see fit to give us the higher life, the life of His saints, then shall be fulfilled in us the saying which is written—How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings.”

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“They come to you with a high end to accomplish. Through this means they see a channel for the spread of God’s truth. It

is by no mere chance that this has come about, but by a power beyond your own. Every gift brings its responsibility, but your strength shall be as your day. Let your hearts be filled with thanksgiving; that is your acceptable sacrifice. Every note of praise in your souls finds its echo in the great harmony of rejoicing now ascending from us all. A common boon, a common gift, therefore are we united in our common praise."

[*By another, in reply to a question:*] "He who came is of that heavenly order whose mission it is to guide and protect all the heirs of eternal life. Their commission is not to single souls, but to the great family of God. Individual guardianship is by spirits of the lower spheres. The name was given for your confirmation in faith. When you have reached a further stage in spiritual progress you will not care to know the precise channel of the high communication. Your first Message was for cheer and comfort; now you have had

your first lesson in heavenly things. This, the first step, is likewise the last, for the will of God is to be done in Earth as in Heaven; and neither in the earthly life, nor even in the higher spheres, can that lesson be perfectly learned."

[*By another:*] "When you have seen and understood these things—that is the meaning of the words of the message, 'your redemption draweth nigh.' A realisation of the meaning of the words is the evidence of this redemption. By this inward light alone can you be said to live truly, to live as unto God, the author of all that is good and true in life. No one can be said to have passed into the condition of the higher life until he feels that God Himself has touched him, and made him live again. Then, and then only, begins the true life."

[*By another:*] "Faith alone can interpret life. Faith will solve for you the enigmas of the world: such faith as you may attain to, tintured with spiritual sight. You may then look calmly on the trials of

life, even on the mystery of pain; for pain and discontent are the rebellion of body and mind against existing conditions. Let this be only a stimulus to bring these conditions into conformity with God's will, who is All Good, and who ordains only that which is for good if His children leave His plans to be accomplished. In all your trials, great and small, turn them into good; either by active endeavor to remove the evil which produces them, or by a quiet submission of your own will to the great Father."

* * *

[MARCH 11, 1883.]

It was written :

. . . "Gradually the light breaks. We must be prepared, or we shall be unable to bear the light. God's Holy Influence will guide our thought, and the revelation will gradually dawn upon our sight. We know that there will come from these Messages an eternal fruition.

"We can now tell you of one of the mysteries of our life. We know the Heavenly Messenger is coming. We know that only the thin veil of our imperfection will hide from us a heavenly and awful presence. Yet when he comes every sense will be stirred as with surprise. We shall have, united, a sense of satisfied expectation, and yet of wonder. Here we enjoy the good things granted us without satiety;

their delights do not pall, nor lessen by custom, or use; the bloom of the first pleasure does not fade, but endures continually. This is one of the mysteries of our life as compared with yours."

[It was asked by what means they know of the coming of a Messenger, and the purport of his message before its actual delivery?]

"It is in the air. We know, how we know we know not. Our being is pervaded with a sweet and thrilling influence, by which we are made to feel the nature of the teaching we await. It is an influence such as we, in our degree, may exercise over those in Earth-life."

[By another:] "Be sure of one thing: whatever may befall, God is leading you to happiness by the easiest road. Happiness is the natural result of the fulfilment of God's will, which continually increases throughout eternity as your expanding souls grow in capacity for good. God's eternity is the measure of yours, and the spiritual life, born from the knowledge

of spiritual things, is heaven begun.”

[*A pause.*]

“If your eyes were opened you would see the great company that is now gathering about us; for we, with you, await a blessing.”

*[A long silence ensued, when the following was communicated in a measured form, as if dictated sentence by sentence.]*¹

“Behold the Love of God!

“Behold Him who is uncreated Love, unbounded by time, or space; who has loved you with an everlasting love; who is the God of love, and worthy of all love.

“Behold Him whose love is Life; whose life is Love; who binds all spheres in one by the unity of the Spirit, by the bond of a common paternity, by the hope of a common inheritance.

“The home of His children is in the Heart of God, who fills all worlds; realise His sacred presence in the inner sanctuary of your secret life, so may you now begin to

possess Him, whom to know is the bliss of heaven. Press onward to the goal, the crown of reward, gazing steadfastly on the love of the Eternal Father, till He receives all those who are perfected by patience into the inheritance of the children of God. Then shall happiness be changed into heavenly joy, when He makes manifest the glory that encompasses His throne. Then shall you know the serene stillness of a soul that rests in God, the rapture of doing Him service, the ethereal calm of a will united to the Divine. Then shall you be tranquilised, gladdened, refreshed, and satisfied, with the fruition of God; for He, the everlasting God, will be All in all.

“‘O King of all beauty and glory, we desire no inheritance beside Thee.’”

[On a subsequent occasion the following was communicated:]

“These Messages are a great blessing to

us all, for they come from the source of All Good. We know that he who brought these words of comfort is God's Messenger. God is love, and by the exercise of the love of God we call around us those who stand before the great Author of Love. . . .

“When you exercise the love of God in your hearts then you may expect the blessing of those who stand in His immediate presence. And we likewise stand and watch and wait to help forward those who, in Earth-life, seek the presence of our common Father, who is ever ready to bless His children.”

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“They who come out from God's presence are Messengers, whose joyful service it is to bring life to the souls of men. They are God's instruments for making conscious in man the operation of the Spirit.

“The teaching of old, which came in like manner to the beloved of the Lord, has its echo in our hearts: Beloved, now are we

the children of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He, our King, our Master, our Leader, the divine Son of God, shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is, and the light of His purity will pervade our souls and conform us to His likeness; not only as by the reflection of His image, but the influence of His purity and beauty and virtue will be communicated to our natures.

“A magnetic virtue of healing went out from Him when He dwelt on Earth, and a virtue of sanctification goes out from Him now to those to whom He draws near.” . . .

* * *

[DECEMBER 28, 1884.]

It was written :

. . . “We feel the pressure of a solemn influence, as if our thoughts were restrained that some higher power may find expression when perfect harmony is established. We dare not be too confident that this will be in words, but we are sure that a higher presence will make itself felt.

“We know only in part, and are conscious of the unworthiness and imperfection of the means by which this higher influence can reach you. Holiness of heart can alone render us meet channels for such gifts. The knowledge that the treasure, though given in earthen vessels, is not lessened by contact with weakness and imperfection, does not do away with the feeling that an

unworthy attitude of mind unfits us for a great duty.

“Here we are ever striving for a fuller knowledge of God. The desire for God is the first principle of our spiritual being, as the contemplation of Him is the end of all our hopes.”

[*By another:*] “The light that now shines on you imposes on you a deeper responsibility for these gifts of God. If you find deep, deep in your hearts the desire for God, for the knowledge and love of God, you must not dare to hold these gifts lightly, as if they were dependent on your will. They are implanted in you by God, to whom you must render account. But the dealings of God with you are from a Father, not a taskmaster.” . . .

“In the sincere heart truth asserts its sovereignty, and every deep thought of truth leads the mind to God.”

[*By another:*] “Be calm and trustful; the end is not yet. But that which you earnestly strive for, even if not attained in

your present sphere, will be granted in fullest measure in the day that God appoints."

[*A pause.*]

"A word will come to you from beyond!

"When God's Messengers come to us we must bid farewell to sense and sight. All here is in the realm of faith. Faith alone can pierce the cloud and penetrate the thick darkness in which, because of our weakness and imperfection, God is veiled."

[*A long silence, after which these words followed:*] "There standeth one amongst you that you know not!

A change of influence :

"Peace on Earth, good will to men.

"Even the peace of God, which shall possess and satisfy your souls; for He is the end of all your aspirations and desires, the port of the wanderer, the home of the exile, the fulfilment of your love.

"Lift up your hearts, fear nothing, for His love is around you. By purity and love prepare His tabernacle; walking in His presence go on to perfection till your life,

being conformed to His will, is no longer yours, but His.

“ ‘He makes you partakers of His nature; in you He wills to dwell, that He may be made manifest to the world, and that His invisible glory may be revealed. Open your hearts to Him, that He may rest and dwell in you, and fill you with the gifts of love. Unite your weakness to His strength, your imperfection to His holiness; bear your human griefs with Him who traveled the hard road of sorrow even to the death of the cross; trust all to His guiding hand, and rest in the Peace of God. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but His kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the covenant of His peace be removed, saith the Lord, who hath mercy upon you.’ ”

* * *

[After reading aloud the words received on the previous occasion, it was written:]

. . . “Nothing unites us so closely as our receiving these wonderful words together, for they are the very Life of life. We have our own inward revealings, as you may have in the Earth-life; but these spoken words, which come to us in clear and distinct form, that you may receive them, are more to us than the still small voice. God speaks silently to the silent heart, but in these Messages of Grace He speaks as a Father to His children, and we believe that we can hear in them the very tones of the Divine Love. These occasions quicken into a most intense and vivid emotion our desire for God. Of this we are deeply conscious even when resting in anticipation.

What we feel when the blessing is in the act of bestowal cannot be expressed in words."

What is the nature of the intimation you receive in anticipation of the gift?

"The knowledge that a revelation, or instruction from a higher sphere, is coming to us, is, as we said before, conveyed by unknown channels. It is an influence that compels us to deep solemnity and a feeling of devotion. This influence seems to pervade our spiritual atmosphere. We are impelled to resign ourselves to it by subduing every feeling of self-will or self-interest. All personal affections are absorbed in the desire to lay our souls open, passively, to the influence of the Messenger. The love of God fills our hearts, and we dwell on the knowledge we have of Him, and of His goodness. Our whole being is, for the time, devoted to this intention. The words vaguely fill the air till the moment of the delivery of the Message. When he speaks, it is to us as an actual union with the Divine. You have it faintly shadowed

in the highest aspiration you may know in prayer and spiritual communion. But for you, in the flesh, it is impossible to experience, in equal degree, this melting of the individual nature into the highest Being of God, realising a union with the Infinite."

Do the Messages always come to you in actual words?

"When they are designed for you in Earth-life they do, and are given in plainest form, that you may be able to receive them. At other times we have communion by thought. These Messages are primarily for you in trust. When you read them aloud we have a sense of the influence of the higher ones who bring them."

What are your impressions of them, the Messengers?

"They seem to be in a state of absolute rest and calm, for their understanding and will are united to the Divine by love. We do not think of them as obedient to God, but as united to Him. Their time of discipline, as we think of discipline, is past, and

they are ever actively engaged in the accomplishment of God's will. There is no more taking up of the cross, or conquering of self, but in doing God's will they continually advance—for he that watereth shall be watered himself. If they recall their past on Earth, even in faintest memory, they must be filled with a sense of their own unworthiness and cover their faces before Him. But for them 'penitence is of the past. Wherein they serve God except in ministering to His children we know not.

“You may think of us as calm and sheltered, and so we are from the physical trials that beset you, for they lie behind us. But in our difficulties and struggles we look forward to the next step we shall take, hoping that there we shall find complete rest. But only in the teachings of the highest are we told of a state of perfect peace; and even then it is not the peace of completed work but of unity with the will of God.

“We are quite able to perceive degrees of perfection among those who have passed

beyond into the higher spheres. Some of them seem as far above us as the stars of heaven are above you; but all are bound together in an unbroken chain, forever ascending.

“The farther we advance, the more gladly we dwell on the thought of eternity, in which we may ever grow nearer to God — ‘Oh, blessed, endless eternity, wherein shall grow continually the love of the Holy Will of God.’”

[*A pause of some moments:*] “My mother, who guides my power when I am communing with you, is going to speak with you by me. She has passed beyond all the surroundings that still keep us near the Earth-sphere; but she can, by me, give you her own words.”

[*A pause, followed by a change in the writing, which was very faint.*]

“ ‘I will speak to you by my son.

“ ‘The Angels come to visit you, to give you a glimpse of your Home, and to draw your hearts thither.

“ ‘Learn what is the Vision of Peace which the Blessed see, when the storms of Earth-life are past, and we stand on the threshold of our true and everlasting Home.

“ ‘We behold the Eternal Truth as you behold the light of the sun—without intention, or effort. God gives to each of us, in our measure, of Himself; we partake of His nature, and share in the work of the Father’s House.

“ ‘Without, you still have to fight with evil. Within, strengthened by conflict, the sheltered soul grows in the grace and beauty of holiness. Wait in hope, till, attaining all you now long for, you rest in the sight of God and are filled with His overflowing love.’ ”

[*The former resuming:*] “ ‘This is a rare power, seldom available—that which links those beyond us directly with you in the Earth-life. There must be a sympathetic chain making the means of communion continuous and unbroken through two distinct spheres. These conditions, neces-

sary for conscious' intercourse, are not essential in spiritual communion. In moments of exalted aspiration you are fitted to hold with the higher spheres a communion that is more real, because it is more spiritual. Then you may experience an essential union, the true intercourse of spirit with spirit through the unity of the Spirit of God—which is 'wider than human life, and deeper than human need.'"

* * *

[*In reply to questions asked concerning "the Blessed," the following was communicated:*]

"We know so much as this: that what we long for, and make an effort to see, is poured forth before them without check, or hindrance. But we believe they are ever earnestly seeking for a further manifestation, for something beyond what is possible for them to communicate to us.

"The Divine within us is ever seeking to free itself from limitation; and this must still be so, in their degree, even with those who dwell in the higher spheres. Each stage of life, while passing, must seem limited according to its ideal standard, but in every successive stage the sight is ever growing clearer, while the aims and aspir-

ations are continually expanding. Your struggle is for freedom; ours is for purity; especially that purity which belongs to the attainment of higher virtue, rather than the laying down of definite sin. Purity is the abandonment of the creature for the Creator, seeking happiness alone in the presence of Light and Holiness."

[*By another:*] "Each spirit, we, or you, or others of a higher sphere, serving God as He appoints, is part of a Divine order, and the purpose each has to fulfil is a sacred work. God needs each one, and He has an end to accomplish by each one. Is your life a struggle to accomplish something? If not, it is no life at all. The light is given that you may follow it wherever it leads; not merely are you to rest in its contemplation."

[*The former, resuming, after a pause:*] "You cannot realise what power is now being put forth to enable this means to be complete for the expression of a word from beyond. Only for a time does a wave

of force and light put it in our power to act thus consciously on you; for, as you know, it is a question of times and seasons, and now we are concentrating all our strength.”

[After a silence the following was communicated under another influence:]

“ ‘God, the eternal Giver of Life, delights in the free-will offering of love. Yield yourselves to Him, whose Divine Will is the law of our world. Cast all your love and desires and purposes and aims and hopes into that unknown Will, till He draws you to Himself. He will take you beyond the reach of weakness and fear. The light of truth and knowledge will shine on you. Around you shall be shed joy everlasting, flowing forth from the encompassing flood of the Love of God.

“ ‘To the lover of purity and the seeker after good, every good gift shall be given. All good gifts are from the Father of Light. The word of the Father of spirits, the King of the true kingdom, is your rock of hope.’ ”

* * *

[MAY 16, 1885.]

It was written :

. . . “We must prepare our hearts when we hope for direct communion with the Saints. We avoid all distractions, whether of companionship or thought. We perform all our duties with a quiet thought of the gift we hope for. Maintaining silence, outward and inward, we speak only with those who share our aspirations. Our thoughts being thus restrained, as by a calm and passive resting in God, we find ourselves prepared to receive the great gift.

“All are gathering, for we know that the heavens will soon be opened.”

[A long silence ensued, when the following words were communicated slowly, as if dictated sentence by sentence:]

“ ‘I, the messenger of God, come from the land of light and beauty.

“ ‘I come in the name of the Light of the World, in whom the distant is drawn near, and before whose presence darkness and sorrow and sighing have fled away.

“ ‘Lift up your hearts, for upon your seeking spirits shines the Light of God, brighter, clearer, purer, diviner than hath entered into the heart of man to conceive, and in that Holy Light each thought and act is revealed.

“ ‘Draw near to God, who dwelleth in light, veiled in the brightness of His infinite glory from the eyes of His creatures; fall down before Him and open your hearts to the influences of His Spirit.

“ ‘Set your affections on the things which are of God, on the infinite, the abiding, the eternal; these only are worthy of your love, for you are made only for Him, and to become like Him is your heavenly heritage. Render humbly to Him the sacrifice of your will, striving for the angelic constancy

of obedience, and His love will draw you near and blend your wills in harmony with His divine will. Let the joys of earth become to you but the shadows of the true; lay down your earthly cares, look up to that pure Light, the source of perfectness and peace, and its beams shall kindle in your hearts the love of God, in whose presence and blessing you shall forever rest.

“ ‘To you shall be granted a foretaste of the reward of those who love with singleness of heart; you shall conceive of sweet delights which absorb and transport the spirit—freed from the burden of the flesh—whose desires are fixed on things eternal. So shall God show you Himself, and all things in Himself. He will dispel all darkness and ignorance and imperfection, and shall bring you out of the uncertainty of hopes and questionings, into the desire and love and light of wisdom. There, in that celestial Light, all joy, all happiness is found. Out of His treasury are shed forth heavenly blessings for the portion of all

those who will open their hearts to receive the gift of His love, and to rejoice in the blessing of the Mighty God. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the plenteousness of His House, and He shall make them to drink of His pleasures as of a river.

“ ‘O, Lord of Hosts, blessed in the man that trusteth in Thee!’ ”

[Subsequently the following was communicated in reply to questions asked:]

“ A cloud of witnesses filled the air when your great gift came. When we receive, with you, these revelations from above, we are filled with thanksgiving, and cherish the lingering influence long after the voice has passed away. For it opens to us the gate of heaven.

“ These Messages link us with the saints, and aid us in holding a more intimate intercourse with them. After such a gift we cling to the influence that still hovers about us, uplifting our minds, if not taking possession. Let us desire further illumination,

and be very jealous of any interest which may disturb our thought—'Lord, it is good to be here! I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me.'"

* * *

[*After reading aloud the words received on the former occasion, the following was written in reply to questions asked:—*]

. . . “The thoughts and feelings inspired by the Messages are so deeply engraven on our hearts that we can trace in each other their effect. A distinct step seems taken in our spiritual life. They influence all our motives, our every thought and act. Having told you of our preparation for these gifts, I now tell you of our attitude after receiving them.”

[*By another:*] “God always grants you that to which you aspire, the measure of knowledge that is meet for you. You cannot look beyond the veil, but just enough light shines through to show you there is a veil. And if you press forward earnestly,

and take joyfully each new ray that is shed forth, the veil will dissolve before your eyes, and you will be filled with a new measure of light and wisdom and glory. For the spirit advances ever, piercing the clouds it attains new heights, sees new treasures within its reach, and passes from glory to glory."

[*By another:*] "Trial and suffering and humiliation have a real value for one who has learned to measure all things by the standard of eternity; they detach the mind from earthly things, and instil a desire to become fit for a higher work. But that which makes life smooth and pleasant veils the heavenly horizon. Remember!"

[*By another:*] "Live ever in the knowledge of the love of the Highest, for love turns the crown of thorns into one of gold, and under its light the wave of trouble flashes with heavenly brightness. Love rules the Infinite Heart, and they who yield to the dominion of love bear the seal of sonship. [*A pause.*] We hear a voice from beyond!"

[“*From the sphere of the Blessed*”:]

“Now is your night, but the morning cometh.

“They who live in Spirit, in the light of the resplendent City of God, need never shrink from His Messengers, at whatever hour, or under whatever strange form they may come.

“We draw near, and nearer still, to the presence of the Divine Father, in sure confidence that we shall at length rest in the eternal temple of peace. God is the eternal fulness, whose goodness is ever overflowing. On earth was the seed-time, now is the spring-tide of blossom, and hereafter shall be the harvest. Then the twilight gloamed around us; beyond us glows the everlasting light. In some happier future we shall know that this, our high noon of blessing, was but the seed-time of a more glorious ingathering of the harvest of truth.’”

* * *

[JUNE 21, 1885.]

It was written:

. . . “Our minds now blend harmoniously, and we look on this unity as one of the clearest signs of progress. We are many, yet one; and in this bond you are united with us.

“They who have begun the spiritual life on Earth are wonderfully stimulated by the beauty and goodness to which their eyes are opened when they come here, and this lends an effective force to their effort to overcome all obstacles to progress. This early, eager impulse, gradually subsides into steadfast, persistent endeavor, and becomes calmer as we advance. . . . Our surroundings all tend to promote the good and expel the evil, often unconsciously to ourselves. When the need of effort grows less, then we

know we are advancing. . . . The reward of obedience is the inward manifestation of the Divine Presence, and the joy and triumph of having overcome the world. . . . Self-love and self-will stand between the heart and God. Commit your way to Him, and trust in Him wholly, for He brings all to pass. [*A pause.*]

“Above us is the light which betokens a heavenly presence. We dare not dispel the power now by individual messages, but all unite in saying: Live ever in the realization of the true spiritual life, the invisible kingdom of Truth and Love; now no longer hidden from you but the real home of the soul.”

[*After a prolonged silence the following was communicated under another influence:*]

“Prepare your hearts!

“He passeth by who is the hidden God.

“The shadowing veil is lifted; He passeth by who is the King of Love.

““With the adoring host of the Blessed He reveals to you the special Presence of the great invisible One, and with still small voice He murmurs to the soul divine secrets, beyond the power of human utterance.

““Commit your way to God, and stay your heart on the Eternal. Dwell here and now and ever in the true home of your waiting hearts, in the heavenly eden of peace, and rejoice in the love of God with His living children.

““Awake, O Winds of God! breathe on us the Breath of Life, and bear our oblation of praise to the Throne of Light.

““Open to us, O loving Master, the higher mansions of purity and blessedness, where Thou abidest ever, that we may rejoice continually in Thy beauty and glory, and dwell in the paradise of delights where shines the Day of God.’”

[After a solemn stillness a Vision ensued to the one in trance; the following words “were spoken with great calmness and gentle-

ness, as if to each one separately," and transmitted by the writing:]

“PEACE BE WITH YOU: MY PEACE I GIVE
UNTO YOU.”

* * *

[In reply to questions asked, relative to their own experience on that great occasion, the following was communicated:]

“You are to bear two words in mind when you dwell on that last gift. One is, ‘Your joy no man can take from you’: and the other is, ‘Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.’

“This is one of the many good things that come by earnest seeking. The steadfast endeavor of all earnest will is never in vain.

“The revelation of what was coming dawned on us suddenly and unexpectedly. There was the sense of a higher influence, and a quickening of the power exerted over us by the Blessed. Then, suddenly, a consciousness of the presence of the Messengers

amongst us, with the promise of our highest blessing. All the holy ones we know of, or can conceive of, seemed to encompass us with their power, heralding the coming of One who is their Master and King.

“‘Prepare your hearts,’ was spoken by those immediately beyond us. Then came the words of the messenger who brought your first great Message. He spoke in plainest words. The Message that followed was from the higher order, unitedly, beginning with the words, ‘Commit your way to God,’ and who were influenced to give it by a greater than they. Their offering of praise was spoken; and the petition that followed it came to us in the words of the Blessed.

“The Blessing of Peace—we need not tell you its source.

“We receive these higher revelations only in the presence of those who are still in the Earth-life; God having so ordered it that ‘we without you should not be made perfect.’ He manifests Himself in different

ways amongst the different orders of His children, and it is only when all are united by an intense interest, which really is unity of will, that a perfect vision, or manifestation of Him, can be given. We know, too, that the Blessed never receive their highest gifts except when some of us, in the spirit land, are united with them in thought and heart. Those who are far beyond the Blessed, whose will is in perfect and absolute harmony with the Divine, dwell continually in the Vision of Peace.

“We have twice before seen this Great Vision in your presence, but our power over you was not then sufficient for us to convey it to you. One occasion was when you received your third great Message—‘Behold the Love of God.’ The other occasion was just before the long interruption, when those few words were given from on high—‘Strive, strive, strive, till hope brightens into sight and rest is won. The Promise of God standeth sure.’ Had you but known it, the promise was then certain that at a

coming day the blessing of His conscious Presence would be yours.

“Sight is rarely given to those in Earth-life. Those with us here to whom it has not yet been granted to see, as we now see, are conscious only of a feeling of deep solemnity and awe, without a knowledge of the wonderful Presence which inspires them. Had you dissipated your thought with attention to external manifestations in this intercourse, even in the slightest degree, you would have been incapable of supplying the link we need with Earth-life, and you would have been far removed from the possibility of sharing with us this great and wonderful blessing.”

* * *

[The following was in reply to questions asked concerning the various "spheres" of the life to come.]

. . . "All conflict must be over before we can pass from this sphere to a higher one. There is a great difference between that willing obedience to God's will which can be attained in its completeness here, and that perfect conscious unity with it after which the Blessed strive, and which even there is not attained in its perfection."

[The question was asked, mentally, whether they recognized more than three general stages, or "spheres," of which some knowledge had been gained through the previous intercourse: namely, the "spirit world," the sphere of "the

Blessed," and that celestial realm from whence the Messengers came forth. It was answered by the writing:]

“We know from those who influence us (the Blessed) that there is between their world and that of the great ones at least one sphere, which bears the same relation to their life (the Blessed) that ours does to the Earth-life.”

What are your chief means of progress?

“There are many and various functions necessary to the development of the human soul, duties which you recognise as pertaining to physical, mental, and social life. But with us, here, the training and discipline of the *spirit* is our absorbing interest; and as violent transitions are hurtful in our world, as in yours, this training is at first accomplished by means of duties connected either with the Earth-life, or with those who are lowest in the spirit-world. The perfecting of the spirit is our means of progress.”

What is the nature of the change in passing from sphere to sphere?

“The change in passing from this sphere to the one beyond is greater than the change you will experience when you pass into this life; it is more marked; but less so, we are told, when those beyond us pass into a still higher sphere. All conflict must be over, as I have said, before we can pass into the next sphere.”

What relation does one sphere bear to another?

“We have learned that each stage of life has its two spheres, linked together in the same relation that exists between what you call the material and the spiritual worlds. But in our intercourse with higher spheres little is told us of what would correspond to the idea of physical or material conditions there, for most of us have but little interest in that inquiry compared to the things that relate to our spiritual progress, and we know that such knowledge cannot be clearly conveyed. Now we would turn away from these thoughts, for they do not concern our real life.”

[*By another:*] “If it is God’s will, in drawing you to the spiritual life, to use an outward ministration, as well as the silent influence of His Messengers, the weakest instrument is the fittest, for then it is manifest that you must look to a power beyond yourselves for these communications, and there is less temptation to self-exaltation, less danger of self-deception, and of necessity you look to the Father of all, invisibly working by human means and manifesting His Presence by organs borrowed from His creatures.

“God shows you Himself. He does not need to show you how to approach Him, or how to serve and worship Him, for the knowledge of Him calls forth a response from your hearts. He reveals what He is, and this revelation of the Divine Fullness is infinite in duration and development; for His gifts partake of the infinity and eternity of His love. Such a gift as you have received was a direct ray from His sacred Presence, kindling inner light.”

[*By another, in reply to a question:*] “The natural effect of Earth-life is a tendency to limit thought by things human and finite. You are inclined to dwell too much in the sense of time, as implied in Eternal Life. Earnest effort and the desire for good is Eternal Life, for it is a partaking of the nature of the Eternal One, who wills only good, whom we seek to approach, and whom to know is Eternal Life.”

* * *

[AUGUST 16, 1885.]

It was written:

. . . "A new influence is present, controlling the power. I cannot name it. He has a special end in view and dictates from a distance. I will interpret his thought in my own words, for the power is given in a strange form:

"Those who have suffered struggle and conflict are better fitted for higher work in the next spheres, they who have borne the burden and heat of the day, who are strengthened by trial, they do here a work for God and draw the world to a knowledge of His truth. Each has a special blessing; the strong do a divine work, while those who dwell in innocence and peace aid with their prayers, and in the end shall crown with their love the victor in many conflicts.

“Now he speaks. I will give you his own words:

“Let all earthly care be as nothing; welcome as blessings the evils of life; see in its sadness, joy; and in its thorns, a crown; for by them the Hand of God is moulding you to do work in His higher kingdom. He purifies by outward fire the inward evil; He draws the heart from a world of weariness and care, to find eternal peace and rest in Him. His love is everywhere, and always, round you. But now, with love surpassing all, more tender, more intense, more loving than heart can conceive, He overshadows you with His personal Presence, and breathes on you power and life. In that Presence is fullness of joy, of glory, power, wisdom; only the dim shadow can be seen, but all is there, proceeding from Him, abiding in Him; and in endless happiness you will one day receive it all through His Love. In the calm moment of His Presence the clouds of Earth will part and reveal a glimpse of the

Heavenly Land illumined with the pure Love of God.’’

[A pause of some minutes' duration.]

“We see the bright light that surrounds the Messenger. We see only by the will of those who come; not by our own power.

“The Presence is coming amongst us, and likewise a great company of those who share our gifts. For ONE will come.”

[A long silence ensued, the following being given under another influence:]

“He draws near who is the Light of Hope, the Crown of Day; He who is the perfection of wisdom, who sees the deepest meaning of hidden mystery.

“His coming is heralded with celestial light, for He is the Leader of the armies of God’s angels, who go forth to conquer all evil with the power of Love and Truth.

“Here is that Divine Heart which lives for you; He who comes to lighten sorrow and care; He who has ever loved you.’’

[A silence was followed by a Vision, as before; in which these words were spoken, and transmitted to the others by the writing:]

“IF YE LOVE ME, YE SHALL BE LOVED OF GOD; AND I WILL LOVE YOU, AND MANIFEST MYSELF TO YOU.”

* * *

[JANUARY 3, 1886.]

It was written:

. . . “No preparation for these gifts is so effectual as a life of active charity and inward faith. A blessing is only awaiting the complete establishment of the power, to be given you. We all are waiting with you, for we never receive these gifts in such full measure as when we are made the channel of blessing for those in Earth-life.”

[*By another:*] “Sorrow and care may truly be said to be turned into joy for those who live the life of the Spirit, because your penalty has then become your purification. Trials do their work of conforming your will to the Divine. They who earnestly seek patience and a calm spirit, and consent to bear whatever burdens are laid upon them, soon reap the first fruits by that

restful calm with which they encounter whatever may befall them in the day of their appointed time. Thus are earthly things united with heavenly, and by the infusion of angelic peace and good will are you made partakers of the life of the Blessed.”

[After an interval the following was communicated “from the sphere of the Blessed”:]

“A Light shall arise in obscurity, and darkness shall be as the noonday; for around you shines the light of a brighter land, and those who draw near to you dwell among the angels, and are fulfilled with the Vision of Peace.

“Let the true Light find in your spirits a quiet abiding place; so shall it enrich the barren pathway of care which leads to the Land of Peace, and shines ever more and more till dawns for you the Perfect Day.

“For you have passed through the Gate of Life; woe and conflict have ceased to affright you, and eternal refreshment has begun. Soon shall you see what

now you believe, possess what you now desire, and attain to the joys of the life of the Blessed. Here the hunger of the spirit is stilled; here is found its peaceful rest; here, perfectly renewed, each power blossoms into fullest life and is offered in service to the King of our love.

“ ‘Here the depths of the heart are sounded; here the forces of the spirit unfolded; here the aspirations of humanity attain fullest perfection under the enkindling light of the Vision of God.

“ ‘Look forward through the endless path of life which has opened before you, wherein you shall rejoice ever in the Love of God, till, united to Him, you possess Him wholly, and share His fullness for evermore.’ ”

[“ *Several voices, unitedly, from the sphere of the Blessed*”:]

“ ‘Come! spirits of light and beauty; come! visions of purity, encircling band of Heaven’s own brightness; come from that Celestial Land, and give us, who wait in longing, a glimpse of your changeless

peace, who dwell in the unveiled presence of God.’”

[“*By one voice—a Messenger*”:] “‘He who is encompassed with ineffable light shall so infuse Himself into your spirits that His Presence may be made manifest in your midst. He will nourish and sustain you, and fill you with the joys of Paradise.’”

[“*By many angels*”:] “‘Hail! O Holy, Living Life, whose unsearchable wisdom disposes all things in perfect order. Hail! Thou Fountain of life and beauty, who sheds forth blessing forever. Guide and preserve Thy children who call on Thee, and shelter them through the storms which are bringing them daily nearer to the haven of rest and glory.’”

[*A silence was followed by a Vision, in which the following words were audibly spoken as before, and were simultaneously transmitted to the others by the writing:*]

“TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH I WILL GIVE OF THE FRUIT OF THE TREE OF LIFE, IN THE MIDST OF THE PARADISE OF GOD.”

* * *

[*A parting word.*]

“ ‘Lift your eyes to the hills of light, the dawning Day is at hand. Go forth on your mission fearlessly; God’s is the Hand which guides you onward. Manifest your light to man, the creature of His Hand, who now gropes in darkness and despair.

“ ‘O, Divine Light, that illumines the path of the beloved of God. Work while it is called to-day, for night cometh, and with the night comes rest to the faithful soul.’ ”

[*After a pause it was asked:*]

From whom are these words?

“The Sent of God.”

[*This channel of conscious communion, was closed with these words, on a subsequent occasion:*] “Waiting for the dawn; the Day breaks so gradually, sending forth these

rays, and then again obscured. But that the fullest Day is at hand we know, and give thanks.

“Those living words fill all voids and abide forever—‘To him that overcometh.’ And this, even this very thing is the victory that overcometh the world—even our faith. Every sorrow and care and trial but proves our faith that God is good, the Father and King of Love.”

[*By another, in reply to a question:*] “The highest, noblest faith does not act regardless of time and opportunity; it waits till the harvest, and then takes a place among the reapers. . . . The better prepared is the field, the stronger will be the growth of the seed, and the world is rapidly being made more ready to receive these glad tidings of great joy.”

[*By another:*] “The mission of the human race is to mould the world to a likeness of the kingdom of heaven, and by giving to others this glimpse of the spiritual world you help them to realise the continual

presence of God—the most powerful check to evil and stimulus to good.”

[*By another:*] “Remember that the echoes of Truth never die; they sound on forever, beyond the narrow limits of your own circle, your own age, your own race.

“Look not too far forward, either with longing, or with fear; to-morrow will dawn with to-morrow’s light. Could you but know our peace in trust and faith!”

[*By another:*] “We look forward to a day of rejoicing when we shall see in Earth-life an impulse go forth from those Messages of Grace. For we see in them the promise of a blessed future, the promise of still larger benefits that must arise from this beginning. We know, but only in part, that this is the first step in a new movement from these spheres to yours in Earth-life. And when we have realised a strength which we shall see has originated here, then we shall go on from strength to strength, and God will give the increase; so that, by His help and guidance, this shall

be a means of bringing many into His kingdom.”

[*By another:*] “The treasures which you possess [the Messages], though they speak in riddles to the souls of Earth, are as dear to us in this land of heavenly brightness as they are to you, to whom they appear as stars of promise on a dark sky. This bond of knowledge and possession unites us and our world to you and yours. We long to be again the channel of communion from that heavenly sphere; but no power of love, or desire, can draw aside the veil until the blessing is ready for bestowal. Farewell!”

THE END

APPENDICES

[It was purposed to confine the selections from the record to those higher products of the experience comprised in Part III, as privately printed in 1894. But on reprinting them for publication it was thought best to add, as Appendices, a few extracts relating to the means and other interests of the earlier stage of the inquiry. These follow.]

APPENDIX A

The origin of the experience was as follows:— Three, and in the earlier stage occasionally four persons, friends, met together in their homes to inquire experimentally into the nature of an alleged conscious intercourse with the unseen by “automatic” or “medianimic” writing: none of whom had any previous experience of this intercourse. During their meetings there was gradually developed in one of their number a state of “magnetic sleep,” or trance, the senses being in a state of total suspension. A pencil was placed in the hand of the one so influenced, and the inquiry was conducted by means of questions asked, to which responses were made by written replies: these were read aloud as they proceeded (as suggested by the writing), “that the minds of all might be bent in the same direction.” Passing beyond an experimental stage the writings varied in character and occasionally in form; preceded by the Christian name, or the initials, of the invisible influence purporting to be guiding the hand. Sometimes the writings terminated in a vision; what was seen and heard in this state being visible and audible alone to the one in trance; the others present participating in this experience as simultaneously communicated by the writing, or as orally reported when consciousness was partly restored. The writ-

ings were seldom more frequent than once a week, and sometimes were separated by an interval of months; a single experience was usually limited to an hour's duration.

By a gradual progress the experience eventually rose to the plane indicated in the selections given in Part III, when all subordinate interests gave place to purely spiritual aims, in seeking light by this means.

APPENDIX B

Early in the experience it was asked of the controlling influence:—Do you guide the writing by your will, or by your hand? To this it was written in reply:—“By both: my will moves me, but the force of my will has also to move the hand that writes. The life-power is actually passing from one to the other while control lasts, from me to ——. I have not atoms of flesh, but a nerve-power and tangible form exists with us, and this is used. By natural law we also are governed, and we come to you thus by that means; but the capacity to understand this can only come when physical conditions pass away. We speak as in a strange tongue when we strive to give knowledge of that which relates to the natural part of our life here; to you so mysterious, to us as simple as breathing. Were we alike in ignorance of your conditions could you explain to us what is meant by color, or sweetness, or fragrance? We find it difficult to explain our outward conditions. Think of us as ever in light, a growing light, forever increasing. . . .” It was asked: Do you regard this

intercourse as abnormal? "No: all intuitional thought comes to you in this way; that is, from another sphere, though you are unaware of it. When you are in open communion with us you see the means, ordinarily you see only the effect. . . . Connecting our thought with the thought of those in the Earth-life is a means of growth in the earlier stages of this life. As all things grow by contact, so the special powers of those in Earth-life supply us with certain forces which give an impulse to thought. The effect of communing with those on Earth is also beneficial to us in augmenting our power of manifesting ourselves in this world, on the principle that activity engenders power, and our activity is first brought about by contact with those who are still in the Earth-life. Some are detained but a short period, while others are slow in developing their spiritual powers. Some carry with them a power of conviction which others reach only by association with those who are still in the flesh. Then, too, we can incarnate our thought with the thought of those on Earth, and thus are good and great things accomplished."

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It was asked if the surrounding objects in the room were visible to them; it was written in reply:—"For us and for those entranced, purely physical things disappear, or are seen only in outline—that is, inanimate objects. The human form [as fundamentally psychic] appears to us precisely as it does to you, and other objects can, by a distinct effort, be seen for

a time. That which is physical does not belong to our material conditions, consequently it does not affect our senses; we perceive it through your minds when we are united with you. But when you exert magnetic force, which corresponds to our material conditions, we are enabled to come amongst you freely, and the light gradually increases in intensity until it is as bright as the sunlight is to your eyes. . . .

“These outward means of intercourse are far below the deep mystic communion of spirit with spirit; in your daily lives you little realise how constant this is; a suspension of these outward means does not check this in the least, though it does lessen your susceptibility to our near influence; or rather the power of perceiving it.”

APPENDIX C

In reply to questions asked as to what may be attributable in this intercourse to the mind of the one whose hand is controlled, or to the minds of others present, it was written:—

“It is easier for me to guide the hand to write of what is in my own mind, than of that I must find out from others present with me; it is also easier to guide the hand to write of things of which you have some idea, than of those that are entirely new to you all; and the hand is more easily controlled when some related knowledge is also dormant in the mind of the one serving as the instrument.” In answer to this it was remarked: It is for this reason that many are skeptical of the truth of spirit-intercourse!

It was written: "Yes, we cannot help that. The physical atoms are hard to move. Ordinarily we use and work upon the knowledge and forms of expression already present in the mind of the instrument used: it is my thought in another's language. It is much easier to do this than to give a verbal message from dictation by others present with me." Subsequently it was said, by the writing, that a verbal message dictated from a higher sphere was "a greater strain," requiring "greater concentrated power and the united wills of those who came."

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At a later day it was written, with reference to the means of this intercourse:—

"Now that you have learned to touch closely on this spirit-world those with me combine in what is said to you. One after another is drawn into the mystic bond that links you to us, and us to you. Each one contributes a new power, a fuller life, a deeper shade of meaning. Others are acting on your minds to enable you to receive what is said; to draw from you the magnetic sympathy that is the secret of our close communion. Every one present with me is taking part in this.

"We come to you by the Unity of the Spirit. Without that bond how poor and superficial would be our intercourse? But in the harmony of the Spirit we have free access, hindered only by the barriers of the flesh. These may grow less and less, but they cannot be wholly removed; without preparedness of heart our words would be as sounds

without meaning. Occasional failures and variations there may be, but you will be given what your hearts are open to receive. Many believe these truths with the mind alone, and they are not conscious of our nearness, nor are we. But when spiritual truths are received in the heart their light dawns gradually on the mind as the stars come out in an evening sky, and they become part of your life.

“True enlightenment can come only from contact with the Light of All Worlds, whose pure effulgence will remain unfathomed throughout Eternity. No searching can enable you to find out God, who is Spirit, but you may learn gradually to see in Him the true union of the spiritual and the material; to know Him in Whom mind and matter meet, the origin and fulfilment of both. . . .”

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On another occasion it was asked: How is this intercourse viewed by those in your world; here it is commonly regarded as a delusion? In reply to this it was written:—“You must know that in our world our association is only with those whose sympathies are with us, especially in higher things. In ordinary matters we come in contact with spirits of all dispositions; but we can isolate ourselves, and in things that concern our deeper affections we are united with those only whose interests are the same as ours. There are many here who scoff at the bare idea of holding intercourse with a world *above* us, who yet know that we can influence those we have left on Earth. They know, almost universally, that com-

munication with the world we have left is possible, but many think it useless. Those who have experienced it in your life will naturally bring their knowledge with them, and will not be "as strangers in a strange land."

APPENDIX D

At this earlier stage of the inquiry it was also asked:—Can you advise us as to conduct in temporal affairs? To this the reply through the writing was:—"We cannot take the power of judging out of your hands; we are not permitted to do that, we can only influence." Have you a clearer knowledge of the future than we have? "What we cannot see, we *know* will be well." Then you see, as we do, with the eye of faith? "It is more than faith, it is a clear knowledge: we cannot see always, but we do know." Then you see farther into the future than we do? "Yes, we feel a future; it is not prescience, but a knowledge that we cannot define to you." Are you able to predict events? "We see sometimes in glimpses, and can judge more correctly what will be the consequence of dawning events. Though we are not always right, for a hindrance to the natural course of things sometimes arises." Then we should not look to you for guidance in temporal affairs? "No; for that would palsy your powers of mind and judgment; in forming which you may be guided by influences far wiser than ours, of which we have no knowledge. . . ."

In reply to questions concerning doctrines of religious belief, it was written at this earlier stage:—

“Do not inquire too deeply into these mysteries, for such matters of our inmost life are impossible to reveal in words. I could only give you *my* belief on a subject on which we have yet much to learn.” Those with you, then, may hold different views? “Yes; and you have more likelihood of attaining a fuller and more correct knowledge of us, and of our life, by a comparison of what you may learn from different sources, as in the things of your own mental world. One reason why we are permitted to have such free communion with you is, that you are prepared to exercise your own minds on what you are told, and do not give a blind acceptance to all that may come to you by this means. It is on account of this favorable disposition for the reception of spiritual teachings that you have developed the power in so short a time, and we too are glad to speak with you for this reason.”

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Before passing into magnetic sleep the person so influenced* desired, at a later stage of the inquiry, that it should be asked, “Why it was that the communications were almost exclusively confined to subjects of religious interest?” When this question was asked, it was written:—“Because we can speak to you more freely on this subject than on any other. The spiritual is the most universally applicable of all elevating interests; all who desire spiritual growth have this in common: and there is a closer affinity between your methods of thought and ours

* Who died some years after the writings ceased.

on this subject than on any other. The unity of the Spirit is our bond, for this unites all spheres in one." [The endeavor to resolve definite, concrete impressions of their outward life and environment was necessarily elusive because of fundamental distinctions in the outward nature of that life as distinguished from physical conditions.]

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On another occasion it was written:—"When I pause in the writing it is often because some new influence wishes to gain expression, but usually those associated with me must communicate through me [the habit being formed which rendered the conditions favorable]: W. D. says, 'To the earthly view life is but a transient appearance, bursting from darkness into light and vanishing away in gloom. But every spirit who has ever inhabited a human body is living and conscious to-day. Each is living a life that is a permanent reality, for every act entails its consequences and in a measure affects every other act. The essence of all we learned on Earth remains with us, and is as real and necessary as anything we learn here.' Here we see with greater fullness and clearness what to us while on Earth was but a dim vision of truth; but the gradual process of growth from dimness to clearness was needful for us. Our desire is to enlarge our capacity, and the knowledge of goodness increases as we"—[advance?]. Here the writing merged into a distinct message from another source, which had begun while the above was in progress, being inter-

polated in another handwriting; as if the two influences affecting the hand were unconscious of each other's control. On inquiring about this later it was written:—"We did not see his presence and supposed your counsellor had gone." This experience included likewise, as shown above (indicated by the initials W. D.), an example of words, not his own, but given by dictation through the habitual control.

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On still another occasion it was written, so faintly as to be almost illegible:—"These long intervals hinder our influence, or rather the development of the power: touch the hand. [This was done and immediately the writing became strong.] While you dwell on that higher Message [see elsewhere, under date of March 11, 1883, page 142], its influence remains powerful. Your treasure is beyond all price. See to it that the earthen vessels to whom it is committed guard and cherish it with all possible love and reverence. The power was taken from me by one higher than myself. These simple means may aid you in working the miracle of translating your minds from darkness into light. They raise you above the Earth and place you, though with unopened eyes, in this world where even common things are transfigured. . . ."

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After several attempts it was written, at the conclusion of a new experience:—"We were obliged

to let — use the power as the only means of obtaining a quiet transition of the force after X [a new influence] had written. Now we are all uniting our strength in the effort to use the waning power collectively." After the hand had gone through the motions of writing, with but few words that were legible, it was faintly written:—"Can you read it?" On replying in the negative, it was written:—"Try again; touch the hand"—the writing then became stronger.

On still another occasion the hand went through the motions of writing a whole sheet without the pencil touching the paper, or only here and there, and very faintly. Eventually it was written:—"Feeble and imperfect, we cannot guide the hand. All our force, every effort, was useless. The words of the Message sounded around us, but were not given in a way by which we could write them for you." . . . [It was necessary to meet again to receive the words, when it was written:] "It is quite impossible for you to join with us in receiving these Messages from the higher spheres if you come together absorbed in other interests. Your proper preparation, but still more perfect passivity of mind during the writing, is what enables us to impress you, and renders you susceptible to the higher influence. . . . All are now gathering about us, for we know that the heavens will be opened to us, and to you: we are all awaiting this." A pause followed, during which the pencil fell from the hand. The head of the one in trance was bent low, as if in reverence, the eyes still closed in deep magnetic sleep. When the hand resumed the pencil there followed

the Message given May 16, 1885, as will be found elsewhere, (page 161).

APPENDIX E

On another occasion it was written:—

. . . “Sorrow ceases when we enter upon the true spiritual life. Prolonged existence may seem to you a prolonged struggle, but this struggle with us is an unconscious one; one in which we are so taken out of ourselves that we do not realise it has been a struggle until we look back and mark the progress that has been made. Perpetually successful effort is conducive to happiness. Our wider outlook reconciles us to much that troubles you, and even when not rejoicing, we are content. . . . A cloud of witnesses here testify that life is the highest blessing God has to give, and without those first stages of trial and discipline you would never be fitted for its consummation. . . . All effort on your part is a means to that end; but the happiness that is sought for, will always fly before you. If this truth is not learned on Earth, it takes long to acquire it here.” Is it more difficult to acquire a new truth there than here? “Yes, if that truth is one which should have been learned on Earth, but to which the mind has been wilfully closed. That you are not to make happiness an end is a truth which Earth-life is intended to teach. Many who even try to do right go through life without acquiring it.”

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Subsequently it was written:—“What was dear to us in the Earth-life is still rooted in our

affections. You part with nothing that is good and pure in passing into this life. Of evil you will be purged: a time of purging comes to all; sometimes in your life, the first life, through suffering; and they are happy who suffer thus on earth, for they enter sooner into a fuller life here." How is it with those who have led evil lives on Earth? "They are helped to cast out evil. The power to cast out evil is in proportion to the exercise the faculties have had in your world—your training-school. As you are in your character, you will be in all your tendencies here, and with us they are as varying as with you." What is now your view of evil? "We recognise in it the presence of a power: more than this we do not know. It is not as obscure to us as to you, but we have not much light on this subject, for it does not personally and immediately concern us." Are you not subject to external temptation? "Not external, for those with me here are guarded from evil. Internal temptation we may be said to be subject to, for the habits we have formed still cling to us; but as the atmosphere is pure, we desire purity, and evil falls away from our natures more easily and more rapidly than you can conceive." Then it is not a struggle between good and evil influences? "No, it can hardly be called a struggle, for almost all the influences are in one direction—that of good." Does evil exist as a means of discipline? "It is subject to God's Almighty Power. It is in His hands an instrument for the training of character; but we are distressed and perplexed at its great force when brought in contact with it; either in those we love on Earth, or with

those here who are undergoing their purification in the ante-chamber of this new life." May not evil be regarded as the absence of good? "It is not merely a negation, it is a positive force; allowed, if not created, by God as a discipline and punishment." Are some with you still tempted with evil desires? "They are, when evil has been willingly indulged in, and the spirit has become infected with it. The more evil one brings with him out of your earthly life, the harder and longer is his purification—although help is ever extended to him."

[These thoughts are of special interest as the thoughts of one speaking from the immediate next stage of life. In this connection the following was dictated through the habitual control, by another influence:] "He says, If you bear in mind that what you do on earth is the key to your future eternal life, you are furnished with a motive to effort in that which is good stronger than any that could be laid down. That is the reasonable motive. The motive of the affections, or the impulse of gratitude, should be as strong, but in nature it seldom is. Thus even self-interest is turned to good. He bade me write these words."

APPENDIX F

[The entrance of a little child in their midst, interrupting a communication, prompted the following:] "The innocence of those who come here as little children saves them from all conflict with the weaknesses which others bring with them. This is more than a compensation for the power

they might have attained in a successful struggle for good, had they lived longer in your world. Some are given a mission to fulfill which detains them here; but when this is not the case their innocence and purity enable them to advance so rapidly that they soon pass on to a higher life. In your world the innocence which belongs only to ignorance of evil might be a source of weakness to one exposed to conflict with evil; but here no conflict comes to these little ones; their innocence heightens all good, and is a perpetual support and guide to them. This does not separate them from those who love them, for they are not capable of seeing evil. One reason why so many pass on quickly must seem to you a sad one—the quick forgetfulness by those they have left behind; especially when they have left on earth but a slight trace of their lives, so that when they pass away they seem to have wholly gone. But while the bond of affection is maintained they will never pass beyond the reach of those who love them; they will remain in this sphere till those who love them come to them, yet ever holding communion with a still higher life.”

APPENDIX G

[*A speculative question*]

An expression of their view was asked concerning the nature and persistency of sex. It was written in reply:— “You must have learned by this intercourse that although the physical body passes away, the masculine and feminine principles of the soul are of

an eternal character. With you, on Earth, God has chosen to embody these principles separately in man and woman; but this is His plan for the lower spheres only. To my apprehension the feminine principle is the spirit, or life; while the masculine principle is force, or the manifestation of spirit and life. Even in your stage of life these two principles have already begun to be blended, and the sphere in which they will be completely harmonised and united is within our conception, though we have no real knowledge of it. This blending begins with you in every true marriage; first in a blending of interests and work. Perhaps it does not begin there, for as these two principles pervade the world there are many lower stages of life where this [duality] is manifested before it is seen in man and woman. In our life we already begin to feel the change that is wrought by the closer union of these two principles; and a little farther on we know that they will be united in one being. No single individual is solely man, or solely woman, a fusion is taking place in each one; but this is only complete in the highest and most perfect natures—you have already remarked this of Christ.

“But for the beginning of this union you must go back to the lower stages of life. That the stronger oppress the weaker is apart from the ordinance of God that has separated these principles in man and woman. This is a condition which must be gradually changed, as must all others that result from human wrong.” Do these conditions extend into your sphere? “They do through its earlier stages; principally because no established influence, or habit,

can suddenly be shaken off. But you may see for yourselves how much these conditions must be affected by the dropping off of the physical body with its inherited weakness.

“The connection between the physical and the spiritual is in many respects clearer to your minds now than it was [before this intercourse was opened]. The senses are not physical, although they manifest themselves through your physical bodies. We experience pleasures in our life which you experience in connection with the senses, only they are purified, heightened, and glorified. Those here who have not begun their effort to improve and advance, experience just the same sensations they did when their spirits dwelt in earthly bodies.

“But there are many things which draw us more closely together than the discussion of such subjects of the natural life. The Messages you have received belong to another sphere, where such thoughts are wholly subordinated to higher interests; and to that sphere you may lift your minds in your calm moments. Here we meet you on common ground as both partaking of the good things given us.”

APPENDIX H

In reply to questions asked concerning the will, it was written by another influence:—“The will is that spiritual part of you which passes into this life unchanged; its powers are intensified here, and its chosen direction deepened: against it the strongest force we can exercise is powerless. . . .

"The force of every effort, of every obstacle overcome, passes into the soul. That same force against which you strive becomes your own, with which to go forth in the vanquishing of evil, to be ever renewed so long as the will is pure. . . .

"The first step in the training of the will is the giving up of self. We are taught to do this indirectly by ignoring self—to have no self-will; and more directly by going out of ourselves and thinking of, and for, others whom we love. . . . When we desire to do the Will of God we find our power to advance is limited only by our power of self-abnegation. In loving others we love God more, for we see them as indwelt and inspired by Him.

"The will is the being, hence in the union of the human will to God you are made *part of Him*, actually partaking of His nature. Different degrees of holiness only imply more or less unity of the will to God."

[These additional extracts from the writings will suffice to indicate their varied character, especially in the earlier stage of the experience; not only in relation to the means, or instrumentalities, but as to the quality of the thought expressed.]

APPENDIX I

While it was purposed to eliminate personal attributions altogether from the selections given in Part III, the culmination of the whole experience seemed to require that some exceptions should be made, as indicating the higher agencies that gradually led up to this culmination. Another important

reason, for one exception at least, is indicated in what follows. Some time after the reception of the first Message, attributed to St. Augustine (page 128), there was discovered among his published writings a passage having marked points of resemblance to the wording of the Message received November 5, 1882. This similarity of expression naturally suggested that the one serving as the means for its communication may have had subconsciously lodged in the mind, or memory, some latent knowledge of this earlier writing. But subsequent teachings revealed the fact that a spirit, even the highest, when descending into earthly conditions for this outward communion, necessarily reënters a state of mind that was his while on Earth; using similar forms of expression, and sometimes even the same tongue—as illustrated in “the gift of tongues.” When this was ascertained, then what had given rise to questionings, tended to confirm the truth of this attribution. The two writings referred to are placed here side by side for comparison:

THE MESSAGE

“To you who crave for goodness as the hart pants after the waters I come with words of love and hope and encouragement.

“We, by the mercy and love of God, dwell in the land of light, in the kingdom of endless ages.

FROM AUGUSTINE'S WRITINGS

“Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God. . . . Blessed are they who have passed over the great and wide sea to the eternal shore, and are now blessed in their desired rest. . . . How long shall I be tossed

Here is undying life, here the peace which passeth understanding, here joy wanes not, here beauty withers not, here love grows not cold, for we dwell in the smile of the Face of God.

“We, too, have been as you now are, tossed on the waves of this troublesome world. Now we stand on the Eternal shore and see your peril as the billows of trial and temptation surge around you. And we hold up to you the light of Love and Truth to guide you home. And we bid you remember that the day is coming, when in you, as in us, patience shall have wrought her perfect work, when hope shall be lost in fruition, and when you, too, shall know the fullness of joy that abides in the Presence of God.”

about on the waves of this mortal life. . . . Hear me, O Lord, from this great and wide ocean, and bring me to the everlasting Haven. O everlasting kingdom of endless ages, wherein rests the untroubled light and peace of God, which passeth all understanding, where the souls of the Saints are at rest, and everlasting joy is upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing have fled away. . . . There, is infinite, unfailing joy; gladness without sorrow; light without darkness; life without death; there the vigor of age knows no decay; and beauty withers not; nor does love grow cold; nor joy wane away; for there we look evermore upon the Face of the Lord God of Hosts. . . . We are tossed about on the wild and stormy waves in the dark night; and Thou, standing on the shore, beholdest our peril. . . . Guide us among the shoals and quicksands which beset all our course, and bring us at length in safety to the Haven where we would be.”

It will be seen that while the form of the Message is similar, the thought and purpose differ; as of one who had attained and experienced what the other writing aspired to and hoped for. The Messages received December 28, 1884, and May 16, 1885, were also attributed to this same influence.

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In this connection it was asked if the names of Messengers of still higher significance, as given in the writings, were assumed by others speaking for them, or were they themselves actually present? To this the reply by the writing was:—"They were themselves present; but their words were inspired from a still Higher Source." The Message of January 7, 1883 (page 133), was attributed to "Saint Thomas, the apostle"; and that of March 11, 1883 (page 142) to "Saint Stephen." Of this latter attribution, it was asked: How was this known? It was written in reply:—"We were told by those who came before, and those who followed after, the Martyr." Of these higher instrumentalities it was written:—"Their desire is to strengthen us in this cause. . . . They come with a high end to accomplish" (pages 135-6). These attributions are omitted in Part III lest they divert attention from the spiritual aim of the revelation by reference to personal instrumentalities which might be deemed incredible even by those prepared to receive their Messages as Words of Life.

In the Message received January 7, 1883 (page 133) the second sentence was addressed (as in several

instances easily discerned in other Messages) to those in the immediate next stage of life who were the means of opening and guarding this channel of conscious communion with the higher spheres; for the Messages were equally for them as for those of Earth.

APPENDIX J

When asked what would be the probable effect of publishing these writings, it was written:—
“You must judge for yourselves; for you are in the conditions where your judgment would be better than ours, who have passed beyond them. But remember that prudence does not count for nothing. . . . We also earnestly desire a wider diffusion of this light in connection with our work here, and we judge of its importance by the effect it has had on your minds.”

That these writings may find a wider field of distribution than was possible through private channels, they have been edited for publication in this form; addressed primarily to all who profess and call themselves Christians (because of their knowledge of the Scriptures), but equally to those also who may be otherwise prepared to receive them with an open mind.

